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Budget 2023 —

Technocracy And Politics!

In economic policy-making, the terms *economics* and *political economy* are usually taken to be interchangeable. But they have different meanings and, until a *political economy* approach is taken, the development of Budgetary policy, as is the case with Budget 2023, will continue to lean too heavily on technocratic methods and technocratic solutions, necessary and impressive as these can sometimes be.

A rethink on the role played by the State in the economy has been needed since the 2008 Crash. One of the reasons why that has not happened is that economics, as an academic discipline, is inherently liberal and anti-statist, and the Department of Finance is staffed by economists. Professional economists invariably perceive Government intervention as a bad thing, a necessary evil sometimes, but always to be curtailed in favour of the real engine of economic prosperity—the private sector. Whatever about other economies, that has never made sense in Ireland, as even a cursory knowledge of Irish economic history over the last hundred years will testify.

Oddly enough, a recent example of a proposal based on political economy being used in the context of the housing crisis came from a professional economist, Dr. Anthony Leddin, Head of the Kemmy Business School at the University of Limerick. In a paper delivered to the *Dublin Economics Workshop* in Wexford and reported in the *Irish Times*, Dr. Leddin showed that the strategy of getting private developers to build social housing and having the State pay huge rent supports on behalf of tenants was “*completely unsustainable*”. The average cost of a unit built by a private developer for

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National Questions In The British And Ukraine States

What should a community of citizens do if it is attacked by the State, as were the Catholics in Northern Ireland and the Russians in the Ukraine?

When the Nationalist community in Northern Ireland was attacked by the British State, it defended itself by force. That placed it in a position of insurrection with relation to the State. When the State then failed to apply itself urgently to remedying the condition of things that led to the defensive Insurrection, the Insurrection went on the offensive against the State. It waged a war on the State.

It then took almost forty years of warfare before the State made the changes to its governing arrangements in its Northern Ireland region which enabled peace to be restored.

Much the same thing happened in the Ukraine eight years ago. The Ukrainian

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The Reluctant Annexationist

In the UK the news from Ukraine comes from the its State Broadcasting Agency, the BBC. The BBC constructs its news via journalists relaying the propaganda produced in Kiev, and analysis from a network of British State security think-tanks.

Tom Stevenson, in reviewing a recent book written by one of the chief Ukraine

analysts for the BBC, Lawrence Freedman, for the *London Review of Books* (6 October 2022), described the people and networks who lie behind the construction of the British State narrative that the BBC presents to its public:

“Many countries find a special place for civilians who share the interests of the state’s military, intelligence and dip-

lomatic bureaucracy but operate outside its hierarchy. In Britain they are spread among a network of security think tanks and academic departments that include the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), the Royal Institute for International Affairs (Chatham House) and the Department of War Studies at King’s College London. From fine old buildings in Whitehall, Temple, St James’s Square and the Strand, they shape much of the foreign and defence policy analysis produced in Britain. Each institution has its own flavour (the Chatham

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Labour Comment, edited by **Pat Maloney**:

The Irish Bulletin:
Frank Gallagher (1930)
Eamon de Valera

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Organised Labour:

Public Sector; Landmark Outcome; Organise, Organise!
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a local authority was €297,800, he said, while the equivalent figure for a unit built by an approved housing body was €87,182: with the differential partly explained by the fact that local authorities provide 30 per cent grants to such bodies.

“Dr Leddin said that the State had paid over €1.877 billion in HAP [Housing Assistance Payments] payments between 2016 and 2021 and a further €896 million in RAS [Rent Accommodation Scheme] payments during the same period. “The State has spent the best part of €3 billion on the current account without any new assets being created”, he said” (*Local authorities should get construction firms to tackle housing crisis*, economist says, Barry Roche, 18 September).

As an alternative, Dr. Leddin proposed the creation of 31 separate construction companies to build homes.

“Each of these 31 State-owned construction companies would be linked to the country’s 31 local authorities. But independent of them, though, they would have a special relationship which would give them access to lands while planning permission

times would also be reduced, he said.

The project would also involve digital integration to ensure specialisation and economies of scale so there would be an overlap between them while they would be built on a break-even basis in that the rental income from them would cover all the costs associated with them, he said.” (ibid)

The thinking behind the proposal is political rather than economic; its focus is on State intervention, bearing in mind the huge discrepancy between the prices charged by private developers to local authorities and the costs incurred by approved housing bodies. It would be more political again if there was a mechanism like Social Partnership, through which public support could be mobilised.

The term *political economy* has been misapplied in the past to mean projects involving co-operation between political scientists and economists. That misses the point completely. Using a political economy approach means identifying a need, and organising resources to meet that need. It is about imposing political solutions on

the economy while recognising realities and upholding the concept of the mixed economy.

On the key issues of Housing and Health at least, there is little evidence of political economy in Budget 2023. Yet many of the tax and expenditure changes and the strategy for protecting the public finances rely on political as well as technocratic thinking. Before focusing on the details, it will be instructive to draw on one of the official documents accompanying the Budget—*Economic and Fiscal Outlook*.

COMPETENT CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The record of the present Government and its predecessor can be summed up as dramatic failure in addressing the structural issues in Housing and Health, and sometimes impressive success in coping with short term crises. The failures are what is driving support for Sinn Fein and causing a section of the workforce to contemplate emigration, although latterly the Government has started to make small inroads into public housing. The successes, on the other hand, should not be lost sight of.

In addition to lingering wounds from the 2008 Crash—a recessionary event without international precedent until the Greek collapse of a few years later—the Irish State has had to contend with three major crises in the recent past: Brexit, the Pandemic, and the current onset of inflation alongside rising interest rates. Counting *Budget 2023*, the last four Budgets have been concentrated on emergency measures. Yet the net outcome through these years has been a minimum of economic damage largely achieved through Government intervention.

The following statement from *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* cannot be denied.

“Available evidence supports the conclusion that the Irish economy weathered the pandemic very well. The phasing-out of temporary budgetary supports during the spring of this year, for instance, did not result in any negative fall-out in the labour market—employment in the second quarter reached its highest level ever, while the unemployment rate fell to just over 4 per cent over the summer, an extraordinary rebound in such a short timeframe. Data also confirm no major uptick in the rate of corporate insolvency while, importantly, the domestic banking system emerged relatively unscathed from the pandemic. Overall, therefore, the macro-data suggest little evidence of any permanent (‘scarring’) damage to the productive capacity of the economy, with domestic economic activity in the second quarter of this year nearly 10 per cent higher than its level immediately before the pandemic” (Page 1).

For many years, even during the false boom of the 2000s, the expansion of the workforce beyond two million remained an elusive objective, yet recent figures show it now stands at just over 2.55 million. Neither is the increase due exclusively to activity in

the multi-national traded sector—which accounts for less than twenty per cent of employment (approximately 400,000 workers). Right across its different sectors, the economy of the Republic has rebounded well from the lockdowns because of sound political intervention.

ENERGY CRISIS

Regarding the current cost of living crisis, however, the authors of *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* dispense with objective analysis, preferring to engage in war propaganda: “The weaponization of Russian natural gas supplies has triggered an exceptionally large energy price shock and undermined global economic prospects” (Page 1). As well as misrepresenting Russia’s actions, this distorts the underlying causes of the energy crisis. It was the West that chose to use economic Sanctions as a weapon of war. Having attempted to wreck the Russian economy, supporters of NATO (among whom the present Government must be numbered) are in no position to complain about Putin returning in kind what NATO initiated.

The European energy crisis predates Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. In Budget 2022 a universal payment of €200 was authorised to offset increases in energy prices. Among the causes were an effect of the quantitative easing that Western Central Banks have supported since 2010, and global supply chain bottlenecks arising from the Pandemic, but incompetent efforts to reduce reliance on fossil fuels like oil and gas were also a factor. Underlying these problems is the manifest fraud represented by the liberalisation of energy markets introduced in the US, Britain and the European Union from the nineties onwards. In areas like air travel there have been real gains as a result of liberalisation, but not so in energy. The creation of pseudo markets for electricity and gas has worked to the advantage of the supply side of these industries, merely adding higher prices and unnecessary complexity to the lot of residential consumers.

In Ireland a number of the smaller companies trading in energy without generating it have already left the market (Panda, Iberdrola, Glowpower and Bright Energy), and more such developments can be expected. We would be better off at this stage if the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) had been allowed to continue as the monopoly supplier; it was a public company with an effective internal culture, and a reputation for reliability in Ireland and abroad through its involvements with developing countries. The ESB was one of the few lasting successes of Treatyite Ireland.

HEADED FOR RECESSION?

One of the questions exercising econo-

mists at the Department of Finance is whether the economy will tip over into recession in 2023. This will affect the Budget’s arithmetic and the authors of *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* are betting that the resilience of the traded sector will be enough to maintain a small rate of growth. Because of statistical difficulties in estimating the size of the economy, and hence of its rate of growth, a new metric, *Modified Domestic Demand* (MDD), is increasingly being cited. The MDD estimate for next year of 1.2 per cent is a significant drop from the figure for this year, 7.7 per cent.

The factors identified as causing this drop are: higher interest rates which are expected to stay near a rate of 3 or 4 per cent over the longer-term (the current ECB rate is 1.5 per cent), inflation which is estimated to run at 7.1 per cent next year, deteriorating sentiment and the changing geopolitical environment. A cold winter in Continental Europe may upset these calculations and be the catalyst of an Irish recession.

THREATS TO THE PUBLIC FINANCES

Apart from the high level of the National Debt inherited from the years following 2008, the Government finances are in relatively good order. For this year the difference between what the Government is spending and its income is estimated to be a surplus of €1 billion; for next year the same metric is expected to be a surplus of €6.2 billion. If the windfall corporate tax receipts are stripped out, these become deficits (€8 billion for this year and €3.8 billion for next year) but they are relatively small deficits, well within Euro Zone guidelines.

By the end of 2023 the National Debt is expected to stand at €224 billion. Before the Pandemic it was €204 billion. The difference of €20 billion is the cost of protecting the economy during the lockdowns, a price worth paying in that the post-Pandemic rebound has been impressive. On the negative side, according to the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, facing into the future, the public finances are vulnerable on a number of fronts (p. 6).

Firstly, rising interest rates will add to the interest repayments on the National Debt. These increases reflect what is almost certainly a permanent structural shift. Secondly, the large amounts of corporate tax currently pouring into the national accounts will decline at some stage. The health of the public finances is to a certain extent dependent on an unreliable revenue stream. Thirdly, by the end of this decade, changes in the population structure (the ageing population) will necessitate an additional €8 billion in public expenditure each year simply to maintain existing levels of service. Finally, the need to finance the transition to an eco-friendly economy will

involve significant public outlays as well as lower public receipts in the years ahead.

THE BUDGET MEASURES

The additional *tranche* of State funding that will flow into the economy through the remainder of this year and all of 2023—called the Budgetary package—amounts to €11 billion, a massive sum comprising two parts. The first part, €6.9 billion, among a wide range of improvements, will fund an extension of the income tax bands, the agreed pay increase for the public service, increases in the old age pension and social welfare payments, the extension of free GP care to six- and seven-year-olds, a trebling of the hourly subsidy under the National Childcare Scheme which is expected to reduce the cost to parents by approximately 25 per cent, free school books for all primary school children and much else. These increases are permanent additions to public expenditure.

The second part, €4.1 billion, will cover once-off payments designed to mitigate the cost of living and other transient challenges. The list here includes: the Temporary Business Support Scheme (max. €10,000 per month), a household energy credit (€600 per household for the winter), a double-week cost of living payment plus the Christmas bonus for social welfare recipients, a Ukrainian Crisis Enterprise Scheme, and a €90 million fund for tourism and the arts to help support the Covid recovery.

All of these measures are welcome and seem to be well thought through, politically as well as technocratically.

CONCRETE BLOCKS LEVY

A Budgetary proposal to impose a levy on concrete blocks has generated controversy. When the Budget was announced in the Dail on September 27th, Finance Minister Pascal Donohoe indicated that a 10 per cent tax would be levied on certain construction products to offset the cost of re-building homes affected by the Mica scandal (houses built using below standard blocks containing mica began to crumble and now need to be completely re-constructed). The cost to the State of the reconstruction is estimated to be €2.7 billion. The levy was to be imposed next April and was estimated to raise €80 million annually.

Following pressure from the construction industry, and from some public representatives concerned that the levy would simply be added to the cost of housing, the proposal has been modified. The rate has been reduced to 5 per cent which will bring in €32 million, and be deferred to September 2023. Responsibility for the scandal rests with construction industry, which lobbied for a relaxation of the regulations on concrete blocks—and with

the Government who acceded to that request. Following the climbdown, there is frustration that the construction industry has been treated leniently and that the cost of the scandal will be borne by the taxpayer and home buyers.

WINDFALL CORPORATE TAX REVENUE

The continuing bonanza of corporate tax receipts pose an obvious challenge to the public finances as referred to above. The windfall may eventually level out or dry up completely, creating a major hole in the Government's balance sheet. Department of Finance officials estimate that the ultimate impact of the OECD's efforts to impose a global norm on the taxation of corporate profits, the *Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) scheme*, on the public finances "is that €2 billion could be lost relative to baseline" (*Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, p. 29). They envisage that the reform will not be implemented until 2024.

As a defence against possible loss in this revenue stream, the Government is transferring €2 billion to a National Reserve Fund this year, with €4 billion being transferred next year. It is also worth noting that the multi-national companies that are mainly responsible for the windfall phenomenon tend to operate in industries that are less vulnerable to international recessionary pressures—pharmaceutical (e.g., Viagra), med-tech, and information and communications technology. That a sizeable portion of the Budgetary package is earmarked as one-off expenditure is another indication that some precautions have been taken against a future collapse in corporate tax revenue.

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The technocratic approach favoured by many economists at the Department of Finance is clearly unequal to the tasks of health care reform and public housing provision. These areas require co-ordinated intervention along the lines of the Leddin proposal. Fear of Sinn Féin's support, as demonstrated in opinion polls, has been driving the Coalition parties towards more interventionist policies. Theoretically, there is no reason why that process cannot be pushed further. There is no reason why Fianna Fail, the Greens, and even Fine Gael, cannot themselves lead a more pronounced shift away from economics towards political economy.

Private sector bodies like the Construction Industry Federation have been using their lobbying power to rip off the State for decades, and public anger against them has grown—as can be seen in the controversy over the Concrete Block Levy. Adopting measures that bring part of the construction industry under State control is one sure way in which a cycle of wasteful public expenditure can be broken.

Europe In Crisis

There was a media report on 29th July of the barrage of hostile shouting at the German Vice-Chancellor (who is a Green member of the governing coalition), at a public meeting in Bavaria. There appears to be growing social unrest based on an awareness of the prospects facing Germany as a result of its Russian sanctions policy.

This will eventually manifest in a political as well as economic dissent from the route the EU has chosen—a route that its present leaders have ensured will result in a test of strength between the idea of the EU versus the reality of national interests. The seminal point of that test will arrive when the decision comes for Germany to actually, rather than theoretically, redirect its available energy capacity to other EU states under the new energy sharing arrangement.

The behaviour of the EU visionaries and their apparatchiks reveals that they see the Ukrainian Crisis as an opportunity for forging a federal identity for the EU. They possibly adopted this viewpoint in 2014, which would explain their agreement to be "fucked" by the US at that time (recalling US Assistant Secretary Of State, Victoria Nolan's phrase of February that year). The realisation that the US was determined to use Ukraine to de-stabilise Russia presented these integrationists with a gift horse that they just couldn't resist.

This awareness, combined with an understanding that Europe—composed as it is of many Eastern European states whose body politic is saturated with anti-Russian sentiment—leads to the inevitable conclusion that the EU is incapable of standing up to the US. Seeing the writing on the wall as an opportunity for forging a common European identity in the fight with the common Russian enemy, the EU visionaries grasped it with both hands. Then, when the sanctions began to show signs of back-firing, like all visionaries, rather than change course they doubled down in the belief that a shared European adversity would produce the same shared European identity outcome that was their goal.

This politically ignorant position was reinforced in the meantime by the arrival in the German Government of the 'Greens' ideologues. The Greens, pursuing their own agenda which at least had the attraction of a basis in a claim for social responsibility—albeit one that itself came from a supra-national perspective—provided the EU visionaries with a political position that could claim a wider relevance than the aim for a federal Europe.

As far as I can see, what we are now wit-

nessing is a kind of coalition between the EU visionaries and the Green ideologues, each determined, for their own reasons, to prevent a resolution of the Ukrainian Crisis for as long as possible. This makes them very useful to the US/UK as the most effective political obstacle to any emerging national sentiment among the EU states. However, such a sentiment will inevitably grow as the repercussions of the Sanctions policies begin to bite in earnest. In that sense, the EU, the Greens, NATO, and the US/UK, have gambled everything on the outcome of the Ukrainian Crisis.

This is a very dangerous position and it seems to me that the only hope for the planet will be the capacity of national sentiment to assert itself in Europe in ways that effectively break that coalition of the visionaries, the ideologues and the believers in manifest destiny.

There are also significant implications for Ireland, in the event of a damaged EU emerging from America's proxy war on Russia. These implications are not lost on Britain, even though it appears that little thought is currently being devoted to them in Ireland.

The loss of the EU as the mainstay of Ireland's capacity to see beyond the large island that physically and economically stands between Ireland and Europe will inevitably create a refocus that will generate the conditions for a renaissance of the revisionist agenda.

Britain's attitude to the Protocol makes it likely that a land border will re-emerge in Ireland as a necessary boundary between the EU and Britain. That border will remain relevant and necessary for as long as both entities remain on their present footing. The question is, which of these entities is likely to suffer most, and lose their footing, as a result of the continuation of America's war on Russia?

In all likelihood, any retreat into a European arrangement that is based on narrower national interests will weaken the EU entity as a counter-ballast to British influence on Ireland. Britain, on the other hand, is likely to emerge as a less damaged entity. Weakening Ireland's relationship with Europe is obviously not the main object of Britain's policy on Ukraine, but I'm sure it's something that Whitehall is aware of and planning for.

Ireland's slavish compliance with a US/UK policy that is designed to lead to a significant damage to the EU is short-sighted and the hostile official Irish reaction to Sabrina Higgins' recent letter on the Ukrainian conflict is indicative of the extent to which Irish politics has been denuded of any sense of where Irish national interests actually lie.

Eamon Dyas

National Questions In The British And Ukraine States

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State, given its independence by Russia in 1991 without having to fight for it, attacked its Russian citizens. These citizens defended themselves against the State that attacked them. They went into insurrection. The Ukrainian State then made war on them as rebels.

The Irish Nationalist community in the Six County region of the British state appealed to the Irish State for support in 1969. The Irish State was the State of its nation. It did not respond to the appeals made to it by the segment of the nation that was cut off in the British state. That cut-off section of the nation therefore made war on its own behalf on the State which attacked it.

The Northern nationalists were nominally citizens of the British state. But when the British State—which had long excluded them from the normality of its public life—responded by attacking them by force, they took it that their obligations towards the State had been ended by the State.

(The Irish Government never acknowledged that this was the case, but the Irish Judiciary did, when it refused to accept British warrants for Extradition for acts against the British State in the Six Counties.)

The Russian minority in the Ukraine—likewise under attack from the Ukrainian State—appealed to the State of its nationality for assistance. The Russian State gave it some assistance, but its main action was to try to get minority rights established in the Ukraine for the Russian population attacked by the State.

This seemed to have been done by the *Minsk Agreement* of 2014, which provided for a degree of autonomy for the Russian minority in a kind of Home Rule arrangement under Ukrainian sovereignty.

Though guaranteed by France and Germany, the *Minsk Agreement* was never put into effect by the Ukrainian State. The Ukrainian leaders later let it be known that they went along with the Minsk Agreement for a while, in order to give themselves time to prepare for a military conquest of the Russian regions which had defended themselves in 2014.

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Julian Assange

An unusual demonstration in support of Julian Assange—the founder of Wikileaks who is currently held in Brixton Prison—was held in Westminster on Saturday, 8th October. The idea was to form a human chain around Parliament to show opposition to his extradition to the USA, and in favour of giving him political asylum. His crime was to have published confidential American military documents—provided by US Army Intelligence analyst, (Bradley) Chelsea Manning—on *Wikileaks*, an online platform, which was started in 2006.

There is a growing campaign in Britain in support of giving him asylum—which culminated in a large demonstration at Westminster on 8th October.

Reuters reported:

"Hundreds of protesters, including Jeremy Corbyn, the former leader of Britain's opposition Labour Party, gathered in a line which stretched from parliament's perimeter railings and snaked across nearby Westminster Bridge to the other side of the River Thames" (<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/assange-supporters-form-human-chain-uk-parliament-2022-10-08/>).

But, like other media outlets, Reuters misrepresented the size of the demonstration.

In fact, *many thousands*, not *hundreds*, attended. The demonstrators, linking hands, surrounded the parliament quarter in a miles-long chain.

Here is an unbiased report, by former British diplomat, Craig Murray:

"Saturday's *Hands Around Parliament* event for Assange was massively uplifting. We hoped for 5,000 and feared we would fall short and fail to link the chain due to transport strikes. But in fact 12,000 people showed up for what became a glorious celebration of dissent and a festival of mutual support.

I walked the entire circuit across the face of the Houses of Parliament, though Westminster Park, across Lambeth Bridge, along Lambeth Palace and St Thomas' Hospital, across Westminster Bridge and back into Parliament Square, and can assure you the chain was fully complete—indeed in places replete—with determined people proudly expressing their opposition to the persecution of Assange, and proclaiming their dissent in an atmosphere that was one of joy and celebration" (<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2022/10/the-spontaneous-expression-of-joyous-defiance/>).

Pat Muldowney

Dail Courts In The North

As a curious footnote to history, the 'Dail Courts' seem to have operated in Northern Ireland too. According to family lore, my great-grandfather was appointed, but as far as I know never actually served, as a Sinn Fein magistrate in East Down during this period. He was not legally trained at all, but was I suppose a trusted small farmer whose judgements in land matters could be relied upon in the event that they were needed.

His grandson ended up as an RUC Inspector!

I think the Sinn Fein movement in NI was effectively suppressed—not by the RUC, B Specials etc—but by the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The AOH Hall in Killough, Co Down, was built in 1926 and was burnt down only a few years ago—by imported Belfast vandals (known locally as Frankies). It had long fallen into disuse, but must have served a function at some point.

Despite the location's close proximity to Ballykinlar Barracks/Internment Camp, Sinn Fein was active in the area during the War of Independence, and Downpatrick was one of, I think, only two, Urban District Councils that returned nationalist majorities after 1922—the other being Newry, if I am not mistaken.

The Belfast imports to the area included the 'Divil' O'Hagan, as well as a largely lawless housing estate on the outskirts of Downpatrick, known as the 'Flying Horse', and is part of his and Eddie McGrady's (SDLP) legacy to the district.

Sean Owens

Kiev—which has not yet become Kyiv in international parlance—then put into effect against the secessionist Russian regions a campaign of what in Northern Ireland was called “*low intensity operations*”. It was estimated that those operations killed about 14,000 people in the eight years after 2014—just less than 2000 a year.

The new, Social Democratic, German Chancellor, mocked the idea that this could be called genocide. And the Germans are experts on Genocide, aren't they?

It begins to seem that the test of whether the deliberate killing of people of a particular nationality is genocide depends on who is doing the killing and who is being killed.

Anyway, there was a steady rate of killing Russians in the Eastern Ukraine by the Ukrainian State that was kept up for eight years, with the declared purpose of reconquering the disaffected area. And, if the Donbas was reconquered, it was a reasonable expectation that the Russian population would be *purged* in one way or another, on the ground of collaborating with the enemy.

The aims of the Ukrainian State at the beginning of this year were to reconquer its lost territory, to join NATO, and to acquire the nuclear weapons, which the nuclear power established in it when it was part of the Soviet Union entitled it to.

The Ukrainian nationalism which was reborn—spectacularly reborn, under encouragement from the European Union, in 2014—had contributed nothing to the establishment of the Ukraine as an independent State in 1991. If its independence had been achieved through conflict with Russia, Russia would certainly have taken precautionary measures against it.

It was as a Russian creation that it had been a functional state. The Ukrainian nationalism, which appeared in the disorder of the break-up of the Tsarist Empire in 1917, was a form of National Socialism formulated by Petliura when Lenin took power as an International Socialist. And its main form of expression both then, and in its revival at the time of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, was Anti-Semitism.

There was nothing exotic about its Anti-Semitism. It was not imported. The Ukraine was the main area of Jewish population in the world. The Jews had established a position for themselves as the commercial/professional class of both the Tsarist and Austrian Empires. And whether the future development of Russia was Capitalist or Communist, the Jews

would be ahead of the game. They were pro-Russian because Russia gave them space to live. Hence they were the immediate enemy of Ukrainian nationalism—the first obstacle that the projected nation had to overcome.

Ukrainian nationalism appeared to have discredited itself utterly by its collaboration with the Nazis in rounding up the Jews and disposing of them. It seemed to have been scotched following the restoration of Soviet authority after 1945, and to have no practical existence in the Ukraine in 1991. That is the only explanation of the recklessness with which Russia gave away the Ukraine.

But historic Ukrainian nationalism revived suddenly in 2014. It had taken refuge in Canada, and had returned to the homeland—presumably under American guidance—and put down roots while the first generation of the independent Ukraine did not quite know what to do with itself.

Putin was obviously shocked by the open re-appearance of Ukrainian Fascism. So were the leaders of the European Union in the first instance. But the United States—though winning Europe's two World Wars—never assimilated European shibboleths and taboos as guiding principles. It took Nazi anti-Russian expertise directly into its service in 1945. Whatever it finds useful in the pursuit of its own destiny—a “*manifest destiny*” with which there is no arguing—is good.

The role played by Canada as a safe haven for a disgraced anti-Semitic fascism is surprising, but the use made of that fascist survival by the USA in nurturing a fanatical anti-Russian nationalism in the vacuous Ukraine, which Russia had frivolously established as an independent State without tending to its own interest in it, is not surprising.

America knows nothing of Good and Evil beyond its own interests of the moment. Whatever serves its interest of the moment is Good. It took part in the war against Germany and obliged Britain to be more helpful to the Russians than it wished to be. And, when Germany was defeated by Russia, it took upon itself Hitler's mission to destroy Russia.

In 1919 the US refused to join the League of Nations, lest its own absolute sovereignty and destiny be compromised. In 1945 it took part in forming the United Nations, but only on the condition that its power could be exerted only through the Security Council, over whose decisions

it had the power of Veto. But it had the decency not to put its name to the *Genocide Convention*—was this because it remembered that it was a state made possible by multiple acts of genocide in recent times, or because of the thought that it might still have some need to engage in progressive genocide?

The Taoiseach has proposed that Russia should be deprived of its Veto power on the Security Council. That is in effect a proposal that the United Nations should be dissolved. It could be established in 1945 only on condition that Russia and America were exempted from its authority. The world belonged to them. And the formation of the United Nations was a formal division of the world between them.

Two secondary Powers, the British and French Empires, were also awarded Veto exemption. This allowed them to fight their dirty wars in defence of their Empires without UN interference. But they were Empires in decline, in principle no more acceptable to the USA than they were to the Soviet Union.

The Veto was also awarded to a fifth state, which was scarcely a state at all at the time. China was an American client-state. But, underneath the puppet regime, a revolutionary movement sponsored by Russia was in the process of building base areas and extending them, and within four years Mao took over from Chiang Kai Shek.

Ireland was seriously committed to the Chiang regime. The *Maynooth Mission to China* was highly active. Its magazine, *The Far East*, was distributed widely, and it was read. Missionary priests were despatched there in large numbers. One of them was a cousin of mine. He got there in time to be expelled, and was sent to the Philippines.

The major change in the actual power-structure of the world within the formal division of 1945 is the transfer of China from one side to the other, and its growth into an independent Power in its own right.

The United States used its Veto in 1949 to prevent the new regime in Peking from taking the China seat in the UN. Chiang retreated with his beaten Army to the island of Formosa/Taiwan. With US backing, he claimed to be still the legitimate Government of China. There was then no disagreement at all about Taiwan being an integral part of China.

Mao's China became increasingly powerful outside the UN, while the significance of 'official China' in the UN became derisory. The situation became somewhat similar to that in Ireland in the mid-1920s when the Free State kept the Fianna Fail party out of the Dail by enforcing the British condition that only those who took the *Treaty Oath* could be admitted to the Dail. President Cosgrave appeared to be determined, in the name of democracy, to keep the representatives of a majority of the electorate out of the Parliament.

The exclusion of the actual Chinese State—the most populous state in the world—did not have the effect of sidelining China, but it threatened to sideline the United Nations.

The UN was saved from absurdity when a belated offspring of Hapsburg diplomacy, Henry Kissinger, became adviser to President Nixon and persuaded him to transfer the Chinese seat at the UN to the actual Chinese Government in Peking. (The idea was to bring about a breach with its ally, the Soviet Union.)

After Washington gave up on its insistence that the Government in Taiwan was the legitimate Government of China, and that the Communists in power in Peking were usurpers, it gradually reversed its position. It now asserts in practice that Taiwan is not part of China at all, and that the Chinese claim to it is imperialistic.

If the conflict in the Ukraine does not prove to be a prelude to the Third World War, the chances are that American insistence that Taiwan is not part of China but is a sovereign state will be.

What is the truth of the matter about Taiwan? Is there a truth of the matter? The United States is the source of truth for the part of the world which it considers to be democratic, and it has changed its mind about Taiwan, which could be both a convenient reason for war on China and a base for it.

While it still had the hope of restoring the party defeated in the Chinese Civil War, which had held out in Taiwan, to dominance over the Communist mainland, it treated Taiwan as part of China. When it gave up on that hope, it started to deny that Taiwan was part of China. Truth is a function of policy in the matter. It is relative to policy. The only absolute is the will of the United States to dominate the world by creating a world of 'free nations' which do what it wants.

Britain tried to dominate the world as an Empire, making no pretence of freedom and equality. Its American offspring is more demanding. Its medium of domination is *freedom*.

Biblical Protestantism was an important element in its making, and in the world that it has made it seems to have placed itself in the position of the Biblical God in the world that he made.

There is a conundrum in the theological circle: is God good because he obeys an order of goodness which exists independently of him, or is he good just because he is all-powerful, and nothing can exist independently of him, and therefore it is futile to apply the categories of Good and Evil to his doings.

The United States was created by Puritan Christians of the purest kind. They were the Elect. They were the redeeming element in a fallen world. The world was a story to them and they acted within the structure of the story. And that story was baked into American culture as it grew.

In the Italian world Biblical Christianity was taken in hand by the State and shaped into Roman Catholicism. In England it became a department of the State. In America it was left entirely free of the State and seems to have remained the most vigorous cultural foundation of many parts of the State.

The story of the world as a Fall, followed by a process of Redemption, leading to an End, was discredited by English Protestants who became scientists and who set out, against the advice of English Catholics, to prove the literal truth of the Bible by investigation of the history of rocks, which had become possible in the early 19th century.

English Christianity atrophied as a medium of actual belief, though the culture of the story remained as a kind of metaphor. But in America the story remains vivid, along with the flourishing of science. And the story tells of an end.

And the idea of Progress as a driving force in the world seems to be a secular residue left behind by Biblical Christianity. Progress supposes movement towards an End.

It cannot be that basic assumptions about the world, held for centuries by the highest and the lowest in a society, can be without influence on the conduct of that society.

The Asian world appears timeless by comparison with the Christian world. A few years ago, before China began to be demonised, a Chinese representative was interviewed by John Humphreys on BBC radio. In the course of discussion he mentioned the Opium War as being relevant to some point brought up by Humphreys. Humphreys was very old at the time. He had grown up in a previous era. He knew something about the Opium War. But what relevance could something that Liberal English did in 1840 have to current affairs in China? That was long ago!

The Chinese explained that it was an event with the consequences of which China was still dealing. It was part of current affairs.

Liberal Britain made war on China in 1840 to compel it to allow markets to be established in China for British Opium. Other Opium Wars followed to force China to enforce and expand the concession it gave in 1840. The State, which was central to Chinese life, was subjected to a process of destruction, and the country plundered: a process which every European Empire took part in.

A Chinese State has been restored. It is intent on establishing a secure place for itself in the world. It learned that, in order to secure its own existence against the Missionary West, the Progressive West, it had to acquire an immense power of destruction with which to threaten the existence of the Progressive West if it isn't let be.

Napoleon advised the West not to interfere with the "*sleeping giant*" in China. Napoleon brought order out of the revolutionary radicalism of France by establishing a right of the State, which overrode the chaos of revolutionary rights—and by restoring "*the infamous thing*", the ancient Church, the first daughter of Christendom.

But the existence of self-sufficient China was a scandalous thing to the eyes of Liberal England. China could not be let be. It was necessary that it should be subordinated to the Christian life of the world that the British Empire was constructing.

The maxim uttered by John Milton, as Cromwell's Secretary of State, remains in force: "*Let England not forget its precedence in teaching the nation to live*".

It is true that Milton's State crumbled before he did, but its seed had been sown in America.

The Reluctant Annexationist

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House sensibility is more mandarin than military), but they have a great deal in common. All have close connections with the intelligence services—after John Sawers retired as head of MI6 in 2014, he took up posts at King’s and RUSI—and an equally close relationship with the national security establishment of the United States.

“Among the British defence intelligence, Atlanticism is a foundational assumption. A former director of policy planning at the US State Department and a former director at the US National Security Council are on the staff of the IISS. Until he stepped down in July, Chatham House was led by Robin Niblett, who spent time at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. RUSI’s director-general, Karin von Hippel, was once chief of staff to the four-star American general John Allen. In 2021, RUSI’s second largest donor was the US State Department. (The largest was the EU Commission; BAE Systems, the British army, the Foreign Office and some other friendly governments account for most of the remaining funding.)

IISS’s main funders—aside from the EU Commission, the State Department and, notably, Bahrain—are mostly arms companies. Chatham House gets more money from the British government and oil companies than from arms sellers, but its list of backers is similar. Despite these US links, however, and despite the fervency of their commitment to American national security priorities, British security think tanks have next to no influence across the Atlantic. Staff from UK think tanks sometimes take temporary jobs in more prestigious offices in Washington, but they very rarely become insiders.”

It is basically British Intelligence, acting for British and US State interests, that owns and forms the narrative about Ukraine that is presented to the British public.

It is, therefore, highly unlikely that what we hear about Ukraine is objective, realistic or informative.

Another important element of news management and control, along with misinformation and disinformation, is that of deliberate omission and suppression of information.

On 6th October, President Zelensky dropped a bombshell when he told the Australian *Lowy Institute* that NATO must carry out pre-emptive strikes against Russia so that it “*knows what to expect*” if it ever uses its nuclear arsenal. He claimed that such action would “*eliminate the possibility of Russia using nuclear weapons*”, before he recalled

how he urged other nations to pre-emptively punish Russia before it launched its military action against Ukraine. Zelensky stated:

“I once again appeal to the international community, as it was before February 24: Preemptive strikes so that [the Russians] know what will happen to them if they use it, and not the other way around.”

This was a clear acknowledgement that Kiev had been agitating for a pre-emptive strike on Russia by Western Powers prior to the Russian invasion of February 24th. Lavrov immediately pounced on this admission by Zelensky, saying that the plea by the Ukrainian President for NATO members to deploy nuclear weapons against Russia was a reminder why Moscow had launched military action against Ukraine: “*Yesterday, Zelensky called on his Western masters to deliver a preemptive nuclear strike on Russia*” and “*showed to the entire world the latest proof of the threats that come from the Kiev regime*”.

Lavrov reminded the West that Russia’s Special Military Operation had been launched after Zelensky had “*declared in January Ukraine’s intention to acquire nuclear weapons*” and to neutralise such potential threats.

Zelensky’s reckless statement (perhaps under the influence of too much cocaine) was a bombshell in the West. The Western media largely suppressed it in news coverage. It was covered in the non-alligned global South, however.

Afterwards, it is clear, Zelensky’s sponsors got concerned about how this would play out amongst their populations and got the BBC’s pompous John Simpson (who had famously fallen foul of Putin and been put in his place at a press conference years ago) to conduct a timely interview where Zelensky performed to script to “*clarify*” a “*mis-translation*” to assuage the sensibilities of the West.

A number of highly provocative acts, outside the normal course of affairs on the battlefield—including the assassination of Daria Dugina; the Ukrainian bombardment of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Plant; Zelensky’s call for empty strikes on Russia; and the “human bomb” attack on the Kerch Bridge, linking Crimea to the Russian mainland—seem to be aimed at getting Putin to over-react or to generate pressure from Russian society on the Russian President to over-react.

Why? Is Kiev frustrated at the level of Western direct involvement in the War and does it want to provoke a dramatic escalation in the conflict that will draw Washington in?

It is clear to the present writer that the driver of the conflict in Ukraine, from 2014 onwards, has been a group of people in

Washington. Since the Biden Presidency, that group has won over the US administration to its project.

Biden promised that “*America is Back!*” after the ‘shameful’ Trump *interregnum*, and that promise has been more than delivered in Ukraine.

Washington has taken over Ukraine, as if it were the 51st state of the Union, financing its economy and war effort, and commanding and controlling a new NATO army made up of Ukrainians. The political leadership in Kiev and the military leadership of Ukrainian forces are now integrated into Washington’s operational and strategic plan, which aimed at weakening Russia—in the knowledge that, if Russia is not weakened, the Ukrainians will suffer defeat. That leadership is the willing and enthusiastic instrument of Washington geopolitics and it has made the Ukrainian people hostage to fortune.

The Kremlin has been all along the reactive force, the responder to the actions initiated from Washington and from Kiev. Moscow’s responses to the escalating situations that have confronted it are presented by the Western political class and its media as forms of aggression and escalations. But it is clear that the shots are being called in Washington and London, in order to provoke reaction in Moscow and to open up divisions in Russia around whether such responses are adequate, inadequate or unwise.

Putin, throughout his career, and in relation to the Ukraine problem, has constantly shown himself to be a minimalist and conservative in policy. He has under-reacted in every circumstance presented to him. That is why there was such surprise and pleasure in the West when Putin ordered the Special Military Operation/invasion of Ukraine back in February. There was great satisfaction that the combination of pressures Washington and Kiev had presented to the Russian leader had finally provoked a decisive reaction by him. Was this self-fulfilling prophecy or a *Thucydides Trap* or both?

The Associated Press reported on 30th September:

“Russian President Vladimir Putin signed treaties on Friday to illegally annex more occupied Ukrainian territory in a sharp escalation of his war. Ukraine’s president countered with a surprise application to join the NATO military alliance. Putin’s land-grab and President Volodymyr Zelensky’s signing of what he said is an “accelerated” NATO membership application sent the two leaders speeding faster on a collision course that is cranking up fears of a full-blown conflict between Russia and the West. Putin vowed to protect newly annexed regions of Ukraine by “all available means”, a renewed nuclear-backed threat he made at a Kremlin signing

ceremony where he also railed furiously against the West, accusing the United States and its allies of seeking Russia's destruction."

In February 2008, when Kosovo unilaterally declared independence from Serbia without holding any kind of referendum, the US recognised the declaration—despite repeated UN resolutions upholding the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Under international law, Kosovo was part of Serbia. The US was detaching another country's territory by force—just as it is now accusing Russia of. And then it recognised the independence of the secessionists—just as it is now accusing Russia of.

Professor Richard Sakwa has pointed out that the US endorsed "*the infamous advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice... that Kosovo's declaration of independence 'did not violate general international law'...*" (*Frontline Ukraine*, p.110).

Seeing Washington ripping up International Law, Putin responded by recognising the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in August 2008. Moreover, the Kosovo precedent has long been quoted by the Armenian separatists of the former *Nagorno-Karabakh oblast*, in support of their detaching of this region from the territory of Azerbaijan. During the Karabakh War, the Armenians appealed to their *Collective Security Treaty Organisation* ally in Moscow to intervene to save the separatists. Putin, in rejecting their pleas, made it clear to Yerevan that "*Artsakh*" was not in Armenia, Karabakh is in Azerbaijan!

The US has been careful not to recognise the Armenian separatists but that hasn't stopped Washington from firmly coming down on the Armenian side, as was demonstrated recently by the Pelosi visit to Yerevan and the Resolutions of Congress.

The arbitrary nature of Washington's position on separatism, depending on US foreign policy interests, is exposed by President Biden's insistence three days before the Russian annexation of Ukrainian territory that "*Taiwan makes their own judgments about their independence... that's their decision*". Presumably the principle here is that it doesn't violate the UN charter if it works against China; and it violates the UN charter if it works for Russia!

Furthermore, the US has officially recognised other annexations, most recently the Moroccan annexation of Western Sahara.

Be that as it may, the annexation of another state's territory is unquestionably against international law. However, the interesting thing here is how much Putin tried to avoid taking such a momentous step—and how he was now being provoked into doing so by

Washington's ratcheting up of the conflict to test his mettle.

American provocations and interventions have been evident since the present conflict began in 2014. The Euromaidan protests took place in late 2013, after President Victor Yanukovich refused to sign an *Association Agreement* with the EU. Yanukovich was not in any way a Kremlin stooge. Moscow would have preferred to do business with his main rival, Yulia Tymoshenko, who was a stronger leader and had done the gas deal with the Kremlin in 2009.

But Yanukovich won the Presidency in 2010 and was the leader who was placed on the horns of a dilemma when the EU came bearing gifts in 2013, splitting the country between those who wanted Western integration and those who believed in the balanced policy that had maintained good but uneasy relations with Ukraine's powerful neighbour as well as with Europe.

The Euromaidan Rallies, putting pressure on the Ukrainian Government, started in November 2013 and went on for months in Independence Square in Kiev. By mid-February they had been taken over by radical nationalist groups and on 18th November up to a hundred people died after Far Right *agent provocateur* snipers opened fire. The Government was blamed for the deaths of those who became the sacred victims of the revolution.

The Euromaidan revolutionaries seized government buildings and President Yanukovich fled the country.

The overthrow of the elected Government of Ukraine led to protests in the Donbas, which had voted heavily for Yanukovich and his policy of compromise. Ukrainian paramilitary groups called the *volunteer battalions*, including the *Azov Battalion*, arrived in Donbas to suppress the protests. In March 2014 the new *putschist* regime incorporated these radical military paramilitary formations into the official forces of the State.

The Donbas Russians did not see the Donbas as Ukrainian. They saw their region as *New Russia*, encompassing a large territory to the North of the Black Sea, which had been annexed to the Russian Empire in the 18th Century during the Russo-Turkish wars.

In 1922 the Bolsheviks gave most of the lands of *New Russia* to the *Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic* and banned the term *New Russia*. There was opposition to being part of a Ukrainian state in 1922, and an attempt to form a separate Donbas Soviet State, but this was suppressed by the Bolsheviks.

At that time, in 1922, Crimea remained part of Soviet Russia, but it was transferred by President Khrushchev, who was Ukrainian-born, to the Ukraine in 1954 to increase

Russian numbers in the Ukraine.

Ukrainianisation was carried out as part of the Soviet *nationalities policy*. The President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, noted that—

"we would likely not be independent had it not been for the Soviet education program's support of Ukrainianisation. Tens of millions passed through the schools of Soviet Ukraine. The education they provided would prove to be the most important element in instilling a durable Ukrainian identity."

The Soviet Union was the nation-builder of the Ukrainian State. The Russian Bolsheviks not only provided the Ukrainian State that left the USSR with its extensive territory, but helped build the Ukrainian national identity. While there were Ukrainian nationalists before 1922, they proved incapable of constructing a Ukrainian State or of giving the people cohesion as a national body. The Ukrainian nationalism that existed in 1922 was largely a product of the Polish and Hapsburg Empires, and was much more developed in the west of the country.

New Russia was seen as including eight regions of Ukraine: Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkov, Kherson, Zaporozhye, Dnepropetrovsk, Odessa and Nikolaev. In 2014, as a result of the Euromaidan Kiev *coup*, a "*Russian Spring*" developed, with activists demanding incorporation of *New Russia* into the Russian Federation. Two of the eight regions of New Russia held referendums of independence in 2014.

However, the separatists did not want independence. They wanted incorporation into Russia. Independence was only declared to escape from the authority of the new anti-Russian regime in Kiev that was in place as a result of the Euromaidan *coup*.

Local militias developed to defend the Donbas from Kiev's attempts to suppress the protests and impose its authority. These militias were local developments and not supported by Moscow, although volunteers from Russia arrived to support them. Most famous of these was Igor Strelkov and his 200 volunteers in the *Crimea Company*. They were largely Russian nationalist ex-servicemen, veterans of the Chechen wars and the Crimea rising earlier in the year which Moscow had responded to.

In May 1997 Russia had secured basing rights for the Black Sea fleet at Sevastopol, in the Crimea. This was through the conclusion of the *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership* with Kiev. The Treaty codified the principles of Russian/Ukrainian relations, based on respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty, inviolability of borders, and non-use of force.

Upon Ukrainian independence Russia

had found itself with a large fleet and no warm water port in which to anchor it. During the Georgia-Russian War President Yushchenko, a strong supporter of NATO membership, issued two Decrees, terminating Russia's leasing rights to Sevastopol from 2017.

In April 2010 President Yanukovich overrode the Decrees of his predecessor by signing an extension to the Sevastopol lease until 2042, with the option of another 5 years after that. This was part of the *Kharkov Accords*, under which Ukraine received a very generous discount on Russian gas supply.

After the Euromaidan *coup* in Kiev, Putin decided to take the strategically vital Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine. He got legal formality for the use of the Russian military on the territory of another state through the *Yanukovich Letter*. The Ukrainian President wrote a letter on 1st March, requesting Moscow use the Russian military "for the restoration of law, peace, order, stability, and the defence of the people of Ukraine". This was before Moscow had recognised the new President Poroshenko, so the Kremlin was responding to a request from what it regarded as the legitimate governing authority. Poroshenko had not been elected as President at that point. The document was presented to an extraordinary meeting of the United Nations Security Council to justify the legality of the intervention.

The letter gave Moscow the opportunity to intervene in Ukraine, and Putin said in an interview that: "We reserve the right to use all available means we have to protect... ethnic Russians and Ukrainians, and the Russian-speaking people living in the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine in general". The Russian Government began to talk about *New Russia* and ethnic Russians for the first time, and Putin's speech in the Kremlin after the annexation of Crimea sounded like a Russian nationalist manifesto.

The Donbas rebels, seeing the annexation of Crimea, proclaimed the formation of the Donetsk and Luhansk Republics, and occupied Government buildings in the region. They seized arms and watched events in Crimea with enthusiasm, expecting the Russian Army to arrive to take over the buildings they held. But the Russians never came.

The Donbas rebels complained at Moscow's refusal to regard them as Russian. It became clear that Moscow did not initiate the separatist movement in Donbas and only reacted to it—hoping that it would subside. In early September 2014 Moscow ordered the separatists to stop flying the Russian flag. It told the Strelkov and the Donbas fighters to cease calling for the Donbas to be incorporated into Russia. It required them to demand a federal Ukraine instead.

When Sergei Glazyev, an adviser to Putin, demanded a no-fly zone over Donbas airspace, he was heavily censored by the Russian media which claimed that he was risking nuclear war with the West.

Professor Alexander Dugin was dismissed from his position at Moscow State University for his support for New Russia and Eurasianism.

On 13th April 2014 Kiev launched the "anti-terrorist operation" to return the Donbas to its authority. This officially lasted for four years. It labelled the Donbas as an *occupied region*. The War that continues today in enhanced form, began that month.

On 17th April of that year, Putin said:

"Let me remind you that in Tsarist times... New Russia—Kharkov, Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson, Nikolaev, Odessa—was not considered part of Ukraine. Those were territories that were transferred to Ukraine in the 1920s by the Soviet government. Why they did it, god knows. These lands were taken after the victories of Potyomkin and Catherine II in famous wars based on New Russia. Hence New Russia."

The separatists held referendums on 11th May 2014 on the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk Peoples's Republics in the parts held by the separatists. Around 75 per cent of people voted and 90 per cent for independence.

Glazyev, Putin's adviser, assured the separatists in Donbas that help was coming from Russia.

Putin could have used the *Yanukovich Letter* at this point to take Donbas. But he chose to use the letter only in relation to Crimea. Moscow then moved to shut down the *New Russia* project. The "Russian Spring" became the "Crimean Spring".

Putin charged his assistant, Vladislav Surkov, to come to an accommodation with Kiev involving a ceasefire and demilitarisation leading to autonomy for Donbas as part of the Minsk Agreement. Putin ordered the separatist leaders, Strelkov and Bolotov, to unmask themselves to show they were locals and not Moscow's men.

The Russian President instructed the Russians of the Donbas to "proceed realistically", claiming that the Donbas had a 50/50 population of Russians and Ukrainians, not an overwhelmingly Russian population, like Crimea.

By 7th May 2014 Putin had made it clear that he was not in favour of DPR and LPR independence and instead favoured a federal solution within Ukraine for the breakaway areas. Putin denounced the independence referendums in Donetsk and Luhansk held on 11th May.

On 25th June the Federation Council of Russia rescinded the Decree authorising military intervention after recognising President Poroshenko as legitimate President of Ukraine on 26th May.

Some Russian troops were reluctantly and

unofficially sent into Donbas in the Summer of 1914, only after Kiev's bombardments had led to hundreds of thousands of refugees streaming across the border into Russia. In August Putin held a closed meeting with 50 people from the Donbas. They all requested him to send troops into the region to protect people from Kiev's forces. As a result, the Ukrainians were pushed back from the border with Russia.

The *Minsk Agreements* were signed in early September 2014.

The Federation of Ukraine was favoured by Putin in order to temper the nationalism developing in Ukraine: he wished to make relations functional between the two states. The break up of Ukraine was not part of the Kremlin's agenda, despite the developing separatist insurgency in the Donbas.

Professor Richard Sakwa wrote in *Frontline Ukraine* at the time, explaining to the West:

"Putin... is not an ideologue... he remains rational and pragmatic... He was well aware that the US had lured the Soviet Union into the Afghan quagmire. The architect of that strategy was Zbigniew Brzezinski... His book 'The Grand Chessboard' has been translated into Russian and is part of everyday political discussion. Flushed with the 'success' of his Afghanistan strategy, he now argued in favour of the West arming forces within Ukraine... Putin was well aware of the dangers of being sucked into a war over Ukraine, which would be unwinnable and disastrous. The costs of maintaining even the two regions of the Donbas would be far beyond Russia's limited capacities, while a full-scale occupation of Ukraine was inconceivable... the dangers of escalation and 'mission creep' were well known" (pp214-5).

Putin persisted with the Minsk strategy for eight years. The Minsk I and II Agreements required Ukraine to give the Donbas *oblasts* significant autonomy. The United Nations Security Council acknowledged and supported the Agreements, and they were endorsed by France and Germany.

But attempts to implement them were sabotaged by the US via the armed right-wing movements that wielded considerable influence over the Government in Kiev. The Kiev Government obstructed any implementation and played for time.

The Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics defended their territories against persistent Ukrainian attempts to solve the conflict by force. While the people in those territories had voted for the independence of their republics, and wanted to become a part of Russia, the Kremlin did not want this. It wanted the republics to remain within Ukraine and persisted with attempts to implement the Minsk Agreements.

From 2015 the US and NATO started to build a new Ukrainian Army and by 2021 it was larger than most armies of NATO countries. Secret plans were in hand to launch a new offensive to reincorporate the Donbas Republics within the Ukrainian State. Sometime in 2021 Russia became aware of these plans and large manoeuvres of the Russian military were organised near the border with Ukraine to deter any offensive. The situation settled down temporarily.

The Kremlin was very concerned at the developing threat. Any attempt by Kiev's forces to overwhelm the Donbas, and what was likely to follow, would create a situation in which the Russian Government would be hard-pressed by its own people to intervene. Despite the Kremlin policy of only acknowledging these people as Ukrainians, the Russian public saw the inhabitants of those areas as Russian people and, in the event of attacks on them, would have demanded action to protect them. Failure to protect these people of these Republics would have had serious consequences politically for Putin.

When the Kremlin learned of plans to attack the Donbas Republics in early 2022, Putin finally made a stand, sending ultimatums to the US and NATO, demanding security agreements that would deny NATO membership to Ukraine. The ultimatums were rejected out of hand. On February 17th the Ukrainian Army launched a fierce bombardment of the Donbas, indicating the imminence of a new offensive. Putin decided to act. On February 22nd Russia recognised the independence of the Donbas Republics and signed defence agreements with them. On February 24th it began the *Special Military Operation*.

The Special Military Operation was designed to intimidate Kiev into a settlement with regard to Donbas and Crimea, by a sudden, but limited, show of force. It failed—but only just, apparently.

In *The World Putin Wants (Foreign Affairs, September 2022)*, Fiona Hill, formerly of the US National Security Council, revealed:

“According to multiple former senior US officials we spoke with, in April 2022, Russian and Ukrainian negotiators appeared to have tentatively agreed on the outlines of a negotiated interim settlement: Russia would withdraw to its position on February 23, when it controlled part of the Donbas region and all of Crimea, and in exchange, Ukraine would promise not to seek NATO membership and instead receive security guarantees from a number of countries. But as Sergey Lavrov stated in a July interview with his country's state media, this compromise is no longer an option...” (p.119).

This is an admission from top US sources that there was the basis of a settlement in April between Moscow and Kiev's negotiators. But something, unmentioned above, subverted that deal—something that cannot be named, even among the Western intelligentsia.

I think that shows how carefully the narrative is constructed and how omission plays its part.

The Kremlin's hopes for a speedy end to the conflict in Ukraine were dashed when Zelensky suddenly rejected all the concessions his negotiators in Istanbul had apparently been willing to make in the draft Istanbul Agreement. This happened following a phone call from British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, to Zelensky on April 2nd, followed up by Johnson's unexpected visit to Kiev on April 9th. Kiev began to stonewall.

Johnson communicated to Zelensky the message that, if Ukraine was ready to sign an agreement with Russia, Washington and London were not. Zelensky would be on his own, without security guarantees, if he signed a Ceasefire Agreement that made any concessions to Russia.

This ultimatum made an agreement impossible. Zelensky therefore acquiesced in Washington and London's desire that he continue the War, relying on promises of greater support from the West.

Fiona Hill's article in *Foreign Affairs* is mostly hysterical propaganda about Putin's plans for world domination (like Napoleon and the Kaiser before him!). But there is one interesting passage which acknowledges that the World outside the privileged West is not on America's or Kiev's side:

“Russia is still seen as a champion of the oppressed against the stereotype of US Imperialism. Many people in the Global South view Russia as the heir of the Soviet Union, which supported their post-colonial national liberation movements, not a modern variant of imperial Russia. Not only does much of the world refuse to criticise or sanction Russia; major countries simply do not accept the West's view of what caused the war or just how grave the conflict is. They instead criticise the United States and argue that what Russia is doing in Ukraine is no different from what the United States did in *Iraq or Vietnam*. They, like Moscow, justify Russia's invasion as a response to the threat from NATO” (p.120).

I think it is very clear that the Russian military operation is nothing like the US wars against Vietnam and Iraq, in which indiscriminate slaughter of civilians through American bombing was a prominent feature. The *Washington Post* has estimated the Iraqi death toll at **600,000**. It is widely accepted that between **1.5** and **2** million North Vietnamese civilians and soldiers were killed by US and allied forces.

The World outside the West does not forget its suffering as easily as does the Western public, and it looks with scepticism on US wars “*in defence of democracy*”. It is among people from the post-Soviet states, who were insulated from Western Imperialism, that there are most delusions about US Democracy.

The greater support from the West, and the taking in hand of the Ukrainian army to make it a NATO army, commanded and controlled by Washington, paid dividends in September this year. The successful counter-offensives by Kiev's forces meant that Moscow had to commit to full support for the Russian populations, who were being abandoned in some areas due to the lack of manpower in the expeditionary force.

The military way of rectifying this situation was in a new mobilisation. The political way of doing this was through annexation of *New Russia*, making it clear that Moscow intended to defend these regions with the same will as any other part of Russia. Through this assertion, the Kremlin reluctantly acknowledged as Russians the people it had wanted to remain part of the Ukrainian State. And there was no going back in the conflict.

The annexations did not lead to a re-designation of the *Special Military Operation* to an “*anti-terrorist operation*”, or a full-scale war.

After the Kerch Bridge challenge, Putin responded in typically minimalist style by launching 100 missiles against targets right across Ukraine. These seem to have been carefully conducted and resulted in minimal fatalities, considering the number of strikes.

Scott Ritter, the former American UN Weapons Inspector, said at the time of the annexations:

“I helped plan and implement a war—against Iraq, Operation Desert Storm. We initiated it with a strategic air campaign. We took everything out... We blew everything up, everything. We did that for 6 weeks and then when we rolled in it took us a hundred hours to get the Iraqis to surrender... and we killed 100,000 of them that quick. We could have killed 30 or 40,000 more if we had kept the war going another 24 hours. It was an annihilation... A one-sided fight...”

“When Russia decides it will no longer self-limit what you will see happen to Ukraine is what happened to Iraq. It will be one-sided, it will be devastating, it will be total... It's going to be a completely different reality.”

Ukraine has not experienced the kind of warfare the US waged on the Iraqi people, as Scott Ritter predicted. Putin has proved true to form once again as the reluctant annexationist. But it should be clear now that he would probably be willing to go as far as Washington and Kiev care to push him.

Pat Walsh

“We’ve overdone civilization, and personally I’m all for a little barbarism”

John Buchan, *The Three Hostages* (Later Lord Tweedsmuir, Governor General of Canada and great friend of Elizabeth Bowen)

“If this was civilization—the crowded, prosperous streets, the women trooping in for coffee at Buzzard’s, the lady-in-waiting at King Edward’s court, and the sinking, drowning child—he preferred barbarity, the bombed streets and the food queues”

Graham Greene, *The Confidential Agent*

Sean O’Faolain and Canon Formation

Part 8

Looking back at some of the material I have accrued about the writers/journalists and businessmen involved in *The Bell*, the thing that has most astonished me is how well Sean O’Faolain has inserted himself into the *national* context of those times. This was brought home to me really the other day when I was getting my messages in town and had a look over the papers. Besides all the tabloids, there lay *The Irish Times*, and, sure enough, on the top page there was flagged an article written by Fintan O’Toole, having his usual conniptions about the Irish women’s soccer team singing an old rebel song in celebration of a match-win in their private dressing-room.

Amidst stories of war, energy/housing crisis, the UK again in dire straits about their Prime Minister Liz Truss (now resigned), and economic collapse both in the UK and the EU—there was good old Fintan having a right old rage about a song!

That fleshes out the realities for the elite of our society—no harbouring fear about bills snowballing for them—ah no—just go for the young women whose working class lives suggest *grá* for *their own culture*. The sheer cheek of them embarrassing us like that—that sort of provincialism is not acceptable in our multi-ethnic, liberal, free-thinking society, *they* wrote.

Indeed there was a collective MSM [Mainstream Media] censoring them for daring to be themselves—how can these white men not yet get it—that day has gone.

The Taoiseach, Micheál Martín TD, Fianna Fáil—with regards to another woman, Mary Lou MacDonald, Sinn Féin—was aghast that she should try and shield herself legally from the alleged ravings of another white very privileged man and avowed that her actions were nothing short of “*having a chilling effect on free speech*”. This from the man, who

leads a Government which, through its legal system, has incarcerated one of our outstanding citizens for using his constitutional right to freedom of conscience and indeed that of free speech [a reference to Enoch Burke, a teacher].

One could not make this up. What this adds up to is nothing short of class cultural appropriation by the elites. And, despite the *wokery* about #BlackLivesMatter, and *Me Too*, it adds up to a very ugly truth—only the choices of the Establishment, in the end, really matter. The censor’s sword is never far from being used on those of us who fall outside their cosy consensus.

But, back to O’Faolain, who has begun to be reclaimed ever more by our liberalised media/academia. I was looking at University College Cork’s ‘*Sean O’Faolain’s Century Conference*’ of 2000, and more especially at the speakers. There had been one on *Elizabeth Bowen* the year before, which was covered by the *Irish Political Review*. There were a couple of speakers on O’Faolain who drew my interest, and one of them was none other than Dan Mulhall, who might have been not very well known then, as he was a junior diplomat in the Department of Foreign Affairs. But, in 1998, he was appointed as the first Consul General of Ireland in Edinburgh, Scotland, and since then has had a meteoric rise to the top

of Ambassadorial ranks—culminating to the UK in 2013-2017 and finally to the United States 2017-2022.

Mulhall was born in Waterford in 1955 and was educated at UCC, where he received a BA Degree in 1975, a Higher Diploma in Education in 1978, and an MA in History in 1979—though by then he was already working in the Department of Foreign Affairs as Third Secretary in the Economics Division. He was a Permanent Representative to the EU in Brussels in 1990-1995 when he was appointed Counsellor of the Press Division of the Department. He has been Ireland’s Ambassador to Germany and Malaysia—where he was also accredited to Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. So an all-round impressive *resume*.

What I found very unusual is that he was awarded the *Freedom of the City of London* in July 2017 after his Ambassadorial stint was up. And, indeed, since his retirement he has been feted with awards and honours. In March 2022, Mulhall was appointed by New York University “*global distinguished professor in Irish studies, teaching an undergraduate seminar, ‘Literature as History: Ireland 1880-1940’*. He is also Parnell Fellow at Magdalene College, Cambridge for 2022-’23”.

So what was Daniel Mulhall doing giving a lecture titled, ‘*Sean O’Faolain and the Birth of Modern Ireland*’, in UCC in 2000? I cannot tell you what Mulhall said because my files are rather topsy turvy due to house renovations. But I do remember once hearing him speak in London and was utterly amazed by his slantedly anti-Irish take on politics. Indeed such was some of our reactions that we wondered what country he thought he was representing!

There is always talk that the Department of Foreign Affairs has remained stubbornly pro-British in ways that actually harm our national interest—and that night Mulhall certainly clarified our views. It is no wonder that Taoiseach Charlie Haughey, Fianna Fáil, brought the whole of the Anglo-Irish side of business into the Department of the Taoiseach where he kept a watching brief. Otherwise, our neutrality regarding Thatcher’s British war on the Malvinas Islands, Argentina, would never have been maintained. One only has to look at Simon Coveney, Fine Gael, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, these days to see how our neutrality is being undermined by our Ukrainian involvement in a way that is simply detrimental to our national interests.

Coveney is an old boy from the Royal Agricultural College in the UK, where Peter Philips—son of the Princess Royal—also attended: as well as a *who's who* of the English aristocracy. What do they say about "*ties that bind*"? Indeed, one night recently, on RTE 1's *News at Six*, there was the bold Coveney *raméising* away about Britain's standards of international law being at the very forefront of change—well Simon, tell that to the countries who are now leaving the so-called Commonwealth, finally freeing themselves from the tyranny of colonisation.

And what about us—the Irish—the first colony—raped, pillaged and plundered? Ask Dan Mulhall—or, better still, consult with the writings of Sean O'Faolain. But, of course, Irish history is out of kilter with these men whose learning taught them to hate the Irish and glorify the English.

As other former Empires are starting to examine their past and begin the long path of returning their plunder—(take a bow Belgium!)—guess which are not yet up for

that because they are still aided and abetted by *some* of their former *subjects*! But all is not yet lost. In *'The Tablet'*, 3rd September 2022, there on the front cover was an exceptional story beautifully illustrated:

"Coming home: The Lindisfarne Gospels return to the north-east."

And who was the Bishop (the first was a failure) but Aidan "a model" said Bede (a not always reliable source regarding the Celtic race) "*of what a Bishop should be*". And so it was in 635 that Aidan was given the tidal island of Lindisfarne for his Episcopal See and the rest is history.

I also noticed that Professor John A. Murphy gave a lecture at the 2000 Conference, titled "*O'Faolain and UCC*". I hope he noted for his audience that bitter riposte of the latter when he was neglected for the Professorship of English in favour of Daniel Corkery—"well at least I can say I was at a **real** university—Harvard".

Julianne Herlihy ©

To be continued

position he held in the old CPI. He was also made national organiser of the CPNI.

But these were mere titles. Mostly he sat in a bare office above the party bookshop in Church Lane, Belfast, reading the morning papers. His other job was teaching Marxism-Leninism to the youth section, the *Young Workers' League*. Ireland was not to be his subject.

The industrial section of the Protestant Trade Union leaders paid him a small wage. yet his silence, considering his once IRA connection, made the YWL curious about the history of the CPI, and very soon the few Catholic youth in the YWL and a few concerned Protestant youth wanted to know more. The CP meetings, and their annual conferences, forbid any history of the CPI being mentioned. The braver Protestant youth brought it up anyway and were howled down and even threatened with violence.

One particularly militant Catholic youth, out of work, daring to bring up the subject of Catholic rights to a mainly hostile Protestant CP audience, was approached about a job in the fire brigade. The Secretary of the Fire Brigade Union, a CPNI member, got an interview for him, and before long he was training to be a fireman, and so became a very silent one at meetings. It was generally *tokenism*, with jobs being dished out to a few Catholics outside the CPNI.

The Unions had set up offices which controlled who got the jobs. This to me was the reinforcing of partition by the CPNI Union leaders. It wasn't that the majority of them weren't concerned about the situation of the Catholic community. Some were very concerned, mainly because a severe backlash was always in the atmosphere.

At a rough estimate, the Protestant membership was around 85 percent of the Unions.

The grip of monopoly Unionism was its most severe just after WW2, and right into the 1950s. Nevertheless, the RUC seemed quite pleased with the CPNI. At open air meetings there were rarely any of them in attendance, whereas it was the youth section, the YWL, they concentrated on, sometimes filling Church Lane with police while these young people met above the bookshop. It was supposed to spread fear but it did the opposite: it made the YWL members feel important, that they would do this to a small organisation—and, of course, being mainly young Protestants, they didn't feel the RUC would harm them.

The YWL members, who did care about Catholic rights, also had had to deal with the RUC Special Branch, which seemed to be everywhere: from standing in the Party bookshop advising that Australia was a good country to go and live in, to threats

Book Review

Birth of the Border: The Impact of Partition in Ireland

Cormac Moore. €22.95, **October 2019**

Merrion Press. Kindle £6.01, 2019

Partition Problems

The 1921 partition of Ireland had a bad effect on all aspects of Irish life. There were hundreds of deaths and injuries and thousands were ripped from their homes and forced over the border from both sides. Two jurisdictions were formed and two education systems also came into being, creating great disruption: with personnel dashing South to North and North to South. Socially and culturally things were torn apart, and, in time, both entities of North and South would develop historically different from each other, with neither of the two understanding one another.

The author doesn't mention this, of course, as he is too involved with what was happening a century ago. He is more interested in the day-to-day implications of partition.

He writes that many organisations remained all-Ireland bodies, like the Trade Union movement, Churches, and sport—proving that partition hadn't quite cut the country off one part from another. For example Dublin still controlled the North's water-ways and the lighthouses. Dublin was still paying the Catholic school teachers of the North, those who had opted out of the new Protestant institutions—which had plans for mixed education along the lines of State schools.

My opinion is that partition was still pliable at that time, and many felt it was still a temporary measure. Sometimes, in writing the history of a country, it is

also good to look ahead to what really happened in the end.

Partition continued to harden, and my notion is that the Communist Party of Ireland helped in this when it was broken in two, on the outbreak of WW2—with the Irish Workers' Party in the South and the Communist Party of Northern Ireland in the North.

Because the North was highly industrialised, Trade Union leaders were Protestant, and happened to be members of the CPNI: that was now no longer under the nationalist influence of the old CPI. They set about purging the CPNI of nationalists, if they didn't remain silent. The head of the nationalist trend was Sean Murray, a former Commandant of the IRA, during the War of Independence. He settled for silence on the history of the CPI, and was made General Secretary of the CPNI, a

of torture of members when stopped on a Saturday night when they were just out to enjoy themselves.

Mention of this treatment to the party EC was met with silence. It was their own fault? Not all of the YWL tuned in to nationalism and Catholic rights. The half that didn't wondered why the others were complaining about the RUC: after all, the RUC didn't bother them, the non-nationalist section.

Despite all that the YWL was turned around, changed its name to *Socialist Youth*, and had Celtic lettering printed on their stationary.

The present CPI seems to be back to the all-Ireland CP of the 1930s. It is ironic to think that, while the CPNI suppressed the history of the old CPI, because of its all-Ireland nationalism, the new CPI is suppressing the history of the CPNI because of its Protestant partition background.

Now back to Cormac Moore!

The Royal Irish Constabulary still ruled both parts of the country: and that brought unease to the mainly Protestant North. They began to set up *vigilante* gangs with the danger of anarchy breaking out—until they were formed into A, C and B Specials in order to control them.

Then there was the forming of the RUC. In Britain police training usually lasts 13 weeks but, in the new now Protestant North, it was six months' training, because guns of every calibre had to be made familiar, plus armoured cars of every size, to this new paramilitary force.

Craig, the PM of the now Six Counties, even asked for war planes capable of bombing and firing from the air. Churchill said a police force can't have an air force.

At times Britain had to restrain Craig and co. in their ambitions.

Proportional Representation now existed North of the border, and that saw a majority of Councils throughout the North being nationalist. Craig had to change that to first-past-the-post voting, and that gave the authorities a good opportunity for gerrymandering elections. We think of Derry as being the main victim of this, with city voters sent outside the city to vote (mainly Catholics); and rural voters (mainly Protestants) voting in the city. This was happening all over the Six Counties.

Nationalist organisations and Sinn Fein didn't handle things very well. The new Northern set-up wanted trade to continue between the two entities, but SF organised a boycott: and thus helped to make partition permanent, while thinking they were combating partition.

Ernest Blythe, Finance Minister of the Free State Government, was against the Boycott. Blythe, a Northern Protestant, was at one time a member of the Orange Order as well being a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. But he did prove his worth to the Treatyite Government of the Free State with his ruthlessness. The author says:

“The creation of Northern Ireland was not a clean-cut operation, and Ireland took a long meandering road on its path towards partition. For a start, there was minimal support for two parliaments in Ireland among the Ulster unionists, who wished to remain governed from Westminster. The vast majority of people on the island rejected the Government of Ireland Act 1920, including at least one third of the new northern jurisdiction. There was also significant opposition from politicians in Britain and from the British civil service in Ireland.”

Birth Of The Border is sure packed with day-to-day details of the 1920s era. To quote much more would be like copying the book into an article. It is full of intense, packed chapters.

Michael Collins is much maligned today but not in this book, though there is no particular praise for him either when it's all a work-in-progress. What you get is a very busy man juggling history and dropping some to boos. I think, though I could be wrong, the Northern Catholic still has a great deal of time for him, as does the author. He does put forward the argument that the Civil War helped to cause partition and lock out the Catholic North. Collins is seen as someone who

might have pursued the goal of properly arming the Catholics of the North, but the double blow of the Civil War and his death was the end of that dream.

Surely Collins would have had to atone for what happened in Downing Street? Here was an inexperienced Irish delegation, facing the representatives of a mighty Empire, who had gained a lot of experience in administrating it.

The unionists also found Lloyd George duplicitous. Sinn/Fein/PIRA would have learnt from all that and saved themselves from a major split with brother and sister against brother and sister.

The book begins with acknowledgements, an Introduction called *The Uncertainty and Confusion of Partition*, Then the fact-filled chapters:

1. Towards Partition.
 2. The *Government Ireland Act 1920*.
 3. Armed with only a table and a chair and an Act of Parliament.
 4. Northern Ireland is Born.
 5. The Treaty.
 6. Politics.
 7. Security.
 8. Law.
 9. Business and trade.
 10. Religion.
 11. Education.
 12. The Labour Movement.
 13. Infrastructure and Services.
 14. Sport.
- Conclusion: The Impact of Partition.
Endnotes, Sources and Bibliography,
Index.

Wilson John Haire. 20.10.2022

Public Meeting

Philip O'Connor is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic:

“Rehabilitating Peter Hart: Eve Morrison’s Kilmichael Ambush Aftermath”

A presentation by Niall Meehan

Venue:

**live at the Teachers’ Club, Dublin:
ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND: in person or online**

Time:

Nov 11, 2022 07:00 PM

Followed by Q&A

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89462718014>

Meeting ID: 894 6271 8014

An Aspect Of Ukrainian Nationalism

Attempts in the western media to marginalise the “Nazi” element in Ukrainian politics and in its armed forces have been less than convincing. The facts of the matter, for anyone interested in investigating them, are (still) readily available and pretty indisputable.

The crack units of the Ukrainian military in the early stages of the current 2022 phase of the Ukrainian civil war and NATO/Russia conflict were brigades with names such as “Azov”, “Aider” and “Kraken”, all of which sported blatantly Nazi-style insignia and, on their numerous social media outlets, spouted extreme racist propaganda. The tattoos sported by many volunteers tell their own story. The particular affinity is to the “SS” aspect of Nazism.

The Ukrainian extreme right have this affinity for two reasons. Firstly, in the Ukrainian aspect of both the lightning Nazi invasion of 1941 and the fierce rearguard fighting of 1943-44 (the city of Kharkov changed hands no less than four times), the crack regiments of the ferocious Waffen-SS played a key role. Among them was the “Das Reich” division, whose “wolfsangel” insignia the Azov regiment proudly appropriated. Secondly, the Germans raised a Volunteer SS Division of West Ukrainians in 1943. Of the 80,000 who came forward, 30,000 were accepted for the division, with the other 50,000 being incorporated into SS Police Regiments to fight the Soviet partisans and implement other well-known aspects of German occupation policy.

Ukrainians were also prominent in manning the extermination camps, the police battalions, and the militias who functioned as death squads behind the Front, and even—in the “Trawniki Battalion”—in suppressing the Jewish Warsaw Rising and deporting survivors to Auschwitz.

A similar wartime history characterises the Baltic democracies now in the EU/NATO.

The Ukrainian SS Division has an interesting history. It took part in the desperate fighting: attempting to halt the Red Army’s advance westwards in 1944, only to be surrounded in a “cauldron” at Brody near Lviv in June 1944, where it was largely wiped out, with the remnants surrendering. Elements that escaped, along with rear-area units, regrouped, were stocked-up with a further 12,000 Ukrainian recruits, and sent first to suppress the Slovak Rebellion in October 1944 and then south to fight Tito’s partisans in Yugoslavia. At the end of the War, the Division retreated to Austria, where it surrendered to the British.

After the War elements of these, as well as surviving “volunteers” within Ukraine, were organised by the CIA into an underground army, which carried out guerrilla

actions from the forests of Ukraine and was only finally defeated and finally wound-up by the Soviets in the mid-1950s. Despite Ukraine itself being long “lost”, the commitment of these fighters to the West and its cause was indisputable.

An interesting twist of fate saved the thousands of Ukrainian PoWs in British hands. As Western Ukraine (principally Galicia and Volhynia) had been part of Poland until 1941, and Britain had not recognised the incorporation of those regions into the USSR in 1940, the soldiers were not, unlike other Soviet citizens who had fought with, or provided “security” services for the Germans, repatriated by the British to the USSR. On the useful myth that they were “Galicians”, the British moved them to Britain, where they were employed as much-needed labour in the coal mines, shipyards and elsewhere. Many thousands then secured passage to Canada, home to the largest Galician/Ukrainian diaspora. This accounts for the lead role Canada has played in the West, in radicalising the



Heinrich Himmler inspecting troops of the 14th SS (Ukrainian) Volunteer Division, May 1944 (Photos are from laudatory histories of these units published by Ukrainian and Estonian sources)

current conflict. The British did repatriate the two-division-strong “Cossack Volunteer Cavalry Corps”, which had fought with the Germans, latterly mainly against Tito’s partisans. These were composed not least of Don and Kuban Cossacks, many of who would be characterised today as technically “Ukrainian”, even if they never saw themselves as such.

This aspect of the current Ukrainian conflict is played down or straight-forwardly denied by Kyiv and by the Western media today. But the attitudes of the Azov and other Nazi-type forces permeate deep into the Ukrainian State, as it has been radically reconfigured since 2014. Its Ministry of Defence in March described the conflict as white, western, “pure Slavic Ukrainians” defending “European civilisation” at its doorstep against an onslaught by a “mongrel-race” and “semi-Asiatic horde” of Russians. Sound familiar?

Under American Public Relations direction, such “inappropriate” messages from Ukrainian State institutions have been deleted, and a far smoother PR message developed. Henceforth, black would be white!

Following the first Russian missile strikes against military installations in February 2022, the Kyiv leaders claimed that Russia had deliberately targeted the Babi Yar Memorial at the site, just outside Kyiv, commemorating the single largest slaughter of Ukrainian Jews in the War, testifying to Russian “anti-Semitism”! Israel, conscious of the Ukrainian role in that very massacre, protested loudly against Zelensky’s absurd claims, which seem to have since been quietly dropped.

The Nazi brigades — which were set up in 2014 as the storm-troopers of the Maidan “revolution” by the politically-infiltrated Interior Ministry, rather than by the Army and were blooded in the invasion of the Donbas — have now changed their insignia to innocuous Ukrainian nationalist ones, and been integrated into the army. Apart from Azov’s central role in the “glorious” defence of the Azovstal Steelworks and of Soviet-era nuclear bunker-fortress in Mariupol, these units are hardly mentioned any more.

The Ukrainian State is a centralised Presidential autocracy. Whereas regional (Oblast) Governors are elected in Russia, despite that country’s overall “autocratic” presidential system, in Ukraine they are, as the key senior regional officials, straight-forward Presidential appointees (making Ukraine an autocratic autocracy?).

In March 2022, as Russian troops overran much of the south of the country, meeting virtually no resistance, President Zelensky sacked the Governor of Odessa Oblast, which is centred on the 50/50 Ukrainian/Russian-speaking city of Odessa. In his place he appointed Maksym Marchenko, a military commander who had set up the nationalist “Aider Battalion” in 2014 and led it in the bloody offensive against the separatist Donetsk region that year in which 8,000 Donbas civilians would die. What Russian-speaking Odessa residents think of their new Governor we do not know and will not be told.

In July 2022, Zelensky was forced to recall his most high-profile Ambassador in the West, Andrij Melnyk, Ambassador to Germany, following an interview he gave in the German press in which he vigorously defended the wartime Ukrainian nationalist leader, Stefan Bandera — who had collaborated with the Germans and whose forces had “ethnically cleansed” tens of thousands of Poles and Jews. Given the strength of nationalist feeling in Ukraine, sacking him was not an option, and Melnyk assumed a senior position in the Foreign Ministry. He did not entirely disappear from view, however. When the American oligarch/tycoon Elon Musk — who had made his massive Starlink satellite communications system

available to Ukraine, in coordination with the Pentagon — proposed in September that the War was unwinnable and should be brought to an end with a negotiated peace, the ex-Ambassador tweeted in response: “Fuck off is my very diplomatic reply to you”. He continues to hold his high position.

Since the start of the current War, a campaign against all things Soviet and Russian has been instigated in Ukraine. Most Opposition parties (with the exception of very right-wing nationalist ones) have been banned, Russian-language and independent media have been suppressed, Russian has been removed from the school curriculum, and Soviet War and other Memorials have been demolished. Statues to Pushkin have been taken down and Tolstoy’s War and Peace banned for “glorifying the Russian Army”. Statues of Bandera and other wartime nationalist leaders have proliferated in their place. Many of those celebrated are individuals who participated actively in the Holocaust. The leading and oldest New York Jewish progressive journal, The Forward, once the voice of New York socialism, published a detailed report on this some months ago (see <https://forward.com/news/462916/nazi-collaborator-monuments-in-ukraine/>).

According to the 2001 Ukrainian Census, the last one conducted, approximately 14.3 million or 29% of Ukrainians, concentrated in the east and south, speak Russian as their first language. Alexey Danilov, one of Ukraine’s top security officials, was cited in press reports on 21st October 2022 as calling for the final “eradica-



Volunteers of the Estonian SS Legion (later Division) salute their commanders, May 1943

tion” of the Russian language in Ukraine, which he described as merely a tool for “brainwashing our people”. The second language of Ukraine will henceforth be English. The idea that Ukrainians should have to understand Russian was a “dangerous narrative”, and Russians should “go back to their swamps” where they could “croak in the Russian language”.

Ukrainian hatred of Russia and of all things Russian is of course perfectly understandable in the circumstances. The problem is what it means for Ukraine’s future, its identity, and for the place of its 30% Russian speakers. Not without justification, some pro-Russian bloggers derogatively refer to the post-2014 State as “Banderistan”. A detailed and sympathetic history by Peter Brooke of the origins and development of Ukrainian nationalism, its aspirations and limitations, and its interaction with Russia and Ukraine’s Russian regions, is carried in the current issue of *Church and State*, a sister publication of the *Irish Political Review*. I would strongly urge that it be read by anyone seeking a real understanding of the current war.

If a Ukrainian state is to survive, as it most definitely deserves to, it can only be as a single-nation state considerably smaller in size than the one constructed by the Soviet Union. That much is clear. The elements that previously made it a broader union, encompassing western-leaning and Russian-leaning elements, have vanished. Massive population movements in both directions, both within and outside of Ukraine, since February 2022 have accentuated the process of national division.

The Western Ukrainian War prosecuted against Donbas and Novo Russya since 2014, with the current round instigated and brought to fruition under NATO direction as a proxy war to “weaken Russia”, as US Secretary of State Joe Blinken put it, has made any return to the dream of a broader Ukraine impossible.

“ATROCITIES”

The atrocity propaganda accompanying the current War has continued unabated. There was one Amnesty report which severely criticised Ukrainian use of civilians as human shields in built-up areas in eastern Ukraine (i.e. where the population consists of “orcs”). The honesty of this

report caused outrage in the West and it has since been buried, with the Western press reverting to stories of “atrocities” as something committed solely by Russians.

Such stories have by now reached epic WW1-style proportions. In the early days of the War it was widely claimed, quoting Zelensky and others, that the Russians engaged in mass rapes, including of children, and that 20,000 civilians had been killed by the Russians in Mariupol alone. The UN has since put the number of civilians killed in the fighting in Mariupol in the low hundreds, with “both sides” responsible—but you will search in vain for mention of this in the press. The stories of the bombed theatre and of the maternity hospital, with numerous people killed, have since been comprehensively refuted. You will find little mention of this, apart from the now automatic statement on any Russian claim: “This cannot be independently verified”.

The mass rapes claim were made by Ukraine’s top “human rights” official, and provided for screaming headlines in the Western press. But, when US feminist activists eager to follow up on these crimes and assist “survivors”, attempted to do so, and they could find no credible evidence that any of it had occurred, Zelensky quickly disavowed his official and had to fire her. There have been no further such allegations.

The show-piece atrocity was Bucha, just outside Kyiv, where, on its return to Ukrainian control following the Russian withdrawal at the end of March, pictures of the bodies of civilians spread on the street, and of a small group of men apparently being executed, were widely circulated. The obligatory pilgrimage of foreign Western leaders to Kyiv has invariably involved a solemn pause for reflection at Bucha. What happened in Bucha is in fact widely disputed, with the bodies on the streets only being “found” four days after the town was retaken.

The first Ukrainian military to enter the town were special security forces. Russia claims that a purge of “collaborators” followed, which is what the pictures show. Whatever the truth, on 22nd October, Russia’s UN envoy, Vasily Nebenzya, told a meeting of the UN Security Council that Moscow was still waiting in vain for the list of the names of the victims it had requested.

When Kyiv troops retook Izium in September, following the Russian withdrawal from most of Kharkiv Oblast, similar atrocity stories were aired and given wide western coverage. Needless to say, few entertained any doubts about the claims. A so-called “mass grave” found “in a forest” was widely reported on—but has since turned out to have been adjacent an existing cemetery, and had a cross on it with an inscription giving the number of “fallen AFU soldiers” it contained. They were, it emerged, Ukrainian soldiers killed in the initial fighting and buried respectfully by the Russians. There were also stories of civilians being killed. These are vigorously disputed by the Russians but, despite the many vague aspects of the tales, for the Western press they are simply undisputed “Russian horrors”.

Ukraine media published a photo of a box of gold teeth it alleged Russian troops had extracted from civilians they had murdered in Izium. The trope was an obvious one, with a Kyiv official describing it as “our own little Auschwitz”. All of this was published without dissent in the western media. But for once there has been some airing of doubt. The German *Bild Zeitung* and the English *Telegraph*, both otherwise strongly pro-Ukrainian, had reporters on the ground in Izium and, to their credit, printed what these actually reported. The *Telegraph* man could find no corroborating evidence from local citizens for the “mass execution” claims. As regards the “Auschwitz” story, *Bild* found a dentist delighted to have his patients’ gold teeth, which he believed had been lost to looting during the fighting, returned.

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Sean McGarry—outline of his life continued fom October *Irish Political Review*

The IRB post-1916

Sean McGarry played his part in the renewal and rapid expansion of these three national movements—Sinn Fein, the Irish Volunteers, and the IRB [Irish Republican Brotherhood]. His activities, like those of all his colleagues, was monitored by the Crown Forces, police and army combined, acting under the powers of DORA [Defence of the Realm Act]. These court-martial powers were imposed far more stringently after the attempt to impose Conscription on Ireland (18 April 1918) and the appointment of Lord French as Lord Lieutenant on 11th May 1918.

As a result of these developments, Sean McGarry, along with hundreds of other leading Sinn Feiners, was arrested on 17th May 1918 and deported, without trial, to Lincoln Prison in England. An alleged 'German Plot' was the reason given for these arrests under DORA.

Michael Collins had received information that raids were to take place at the time of McGarry's arrest but he reached McGarry's house too late to warn him. Subsequently, he stayed the night there (A.T.Q. Stewart, ed., *Michael Collins the Secret File*, Belfast, 1997, p.20).

Efforts by McGarry's brother to visit him in Lincoln Prison were officially rejected by the Dublin Castle authorities in July 1918 on the grounds that "there does not appear to be any special case for a visit" (NA, Kew, CO 904/209/274 file on B.J. McGarry).

The police file on McGarry's brother in relation to this incident reported that Sean was an electrician by trade but had not worked in that capacity since his release in June 1917. It added that he worked with his brother at 8 Lower Bridge Street, in a business known as the Dublin Wholesale Small Warehouse Company. The details about Sean McGarry's activities that were available to the police show clearly that he was under surveillance, but no personal file on McGarry has been placed in the official archive.

Following McGarry's arrest, Harry Boland was selected as President of the

Irish Republican Brotherhood and he, together with Michael Collins, played a major part in the General Election campaign of 1918. For McGarry, and many other Sinn Feiners, there was no opportunity to participate either in the Sinn Fein election victory of December 1918 or the first meeting of Dail Eireann on 21st January 1919.

While preparations were being made for the meeting of Dail Eireann, plans were also being made to rescue Eamon de Valera, Sean McGarry and Sean Milroy from Lincoln Jail. Neither Michael Collins nor Harry Boland were in the Mansion House to hear the Proclamations of Irish Independence that were read out on 21st January 1919. They were on their way to England to rescue de Valera, McGarry and Sean Milroy from Lincoln Prison.

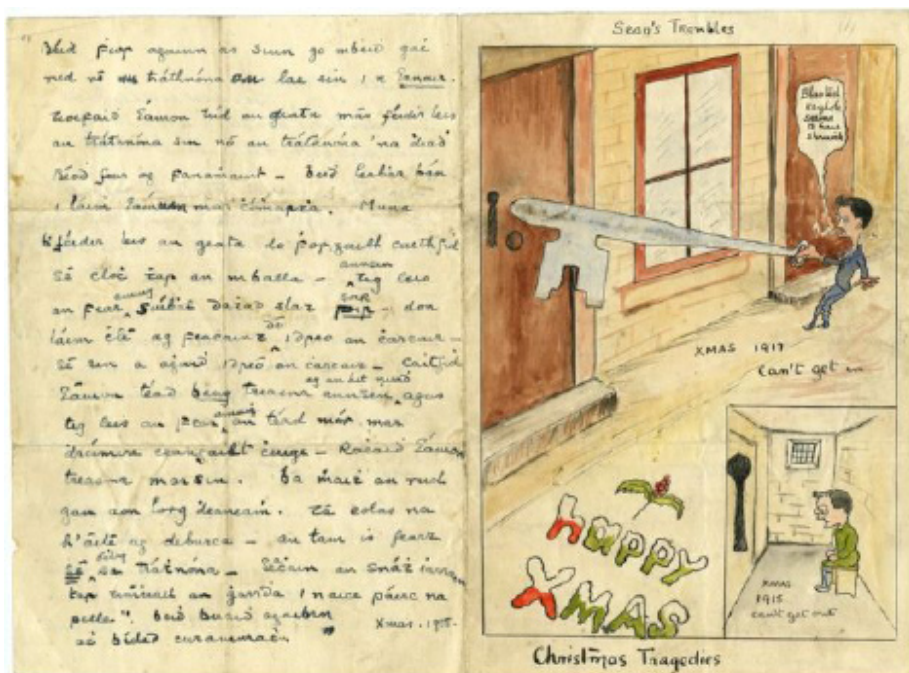
A Christmas Card, drawn by Sean Milroy, which contained a sketch of a key, was sent to the McGarry home. Contact was made with Michael Collins and a message relayed to him that the key was an exact replica of the key to Lincoln jail.

Acting on that information, a key was made and placed inside a cake that Mrs. McGarry had baked. The cake was then sent to the prison but it failed to work (Beaslai, *Collins*, p263). It was in these circumstances that Collins and Boland departed for England. They arrived in Manchester; made contact with other IRB members; and made their way to Lincoln. They arrived at the prison gates on 3rd February 1919 and the escape began. Again there was difficulty with another key that had been cut but, eventually, in the early hours of the morning, de Valera, McGarry and Milroy walked out of the Prison.

McGarry recalled that Collins was there to meet them and walked with them to the centre of Lincoln.

McGarry told Collins that, on the previous day, de Valera had informed his fellow prisoners that he planned to go to America. Collins responded to this news by saying, "begod he's not, he's coming to Dublin. We're going to have to fight and we're all in it" (McGarry, p15). De Valera's plans were discussed later by Cathal Brugha, who visited England (7-9 February), and by the Dail Cabinet.

The immediate concern, however, was to complete the final stages of the escape plan. A team of IRB drivers acted as taxis to take the men to Manchester via Worksop and Sheffield. Sean McGarry and Sean Milroy stayed at the home of Liam MacMahon in Manchester, while de Valera stayed with Fr. Charles O'Mahony. De Valera, Tim Pat Coogan has noted, arrived



The Christmas Card indicating the Prison Key required

at the priest's house at 12.05 on the morning of 4th February 1919, five minutes later than Collins had planned.

Collins and Boland had parted from the group at Worksop and proceeded to London (Tim Pat Coogan, *de Valera*, pp124,129; Beaslai, *Collins*, p269).

McGarry, de Valera, and Milroy returned to Dublin around 19th February 1919. McGarry recalled that he was met at the North Wall by Michael Collins, who told him that he was to be one of the speakers at the Emmet Concert in the Mansion House in three weeks' time.

The concert was organised by the IRB under the name of the *Wolfe Tone Memorial Committee*. Collins was determined, McGarry recalled, to "give the Castle the surprise of their lives" (McGarry, *Collins*, p7; Beaslai, *Collins*, p280; Coogan, *de Valera*, p129). The Concert took place on 4th March 1919. McGarry, dressed in his Volunteer uniform, was brought to the Mansion House by Michael Collins and other IRB members. He made his speech and left by a rear entrance before the police could capture him

Michael Collins and Dr W.M. Crofton

The letter of Dr. Crofton sent to Michael Collins on 10th November 1920 and the response made by Collins to Sean McGarry on the following day are of great historical value. Taken together with another printed letter in Sean McGarry's paper on Michael Collins, they provide one of the first indications from Irish sources that, at the height of the war of Irish independence, peace overtures were being made at the highest level. English sources, notably the Diaries of Mark Sturgis and the Papers of Sir John Anderson, have chronicled various attempts to negotiate a truce in 1920. The name of Dr. Crofton figures prominently in them.

On 2nd November 1920 General Macready informed Sir John Anderson, Under-Secretary at Dublin Castle, that Dr. Crofton and General Wanless-O'Gowan had brought "very important proposals from Sinn Fein". These proposals were put to Macready on the very evening that Kevin Barry was hanged in Mountjoy prison. Anderson, in turn, reported to Bonar Law on 5th November that "a very influential section of Dail Eireann is definitely prepared to accept the essential conditions outlined by the Prime Minister before the recess". He went so far as to say that it was "the first definite indication of a Sinn Feiner on the bridge" (The Papers of Sir John Anderson and the Diaries of Mark Sturgis are located in the National Archives, Kew. The latter have been published by Michael Hopkinson (ed.), *The*

Last Days of Dublin Castle, The Diaries of Mark Sturgis, Dublin, 1999; own book).

The letters in McGarry's collection, and the information on the subject that was provided in his talk on Collins, enable us to place these peace talks in a clearer context. McGarry stated that he "received through one of our lads a letter from a professional man in Dublin". The man was Dr. W.M. Crofton; the 'lad' who brought the letter to McGarry was Robert Henry (Harry) Walpole (McGarry, *Collins*, p.11. Crofton is referred to as 'X', and Walpole as 'Y', in the paper—but the full names are to be found on the letters.)

Crofton, with an address at 32 FitzWilliam Square, was a lecturer in Special Pathology at University College, Dublin; Walpole was a laboratory assistant at the same University and carried out work for Dr. Crofton. It was this working relationship that provided the foundation for the contact with the Sinn Fein leaders. Walpole, himself, had taken part in the 1916 Rising. Indeed, he claimed, not only to be "a personal friend" of James Connolly, but also that it was he, rather than Gearoid O'Sullivan, who raised the flag of the Irish Republic over the General Post Office in 1916 (*The Times*, 7 March 1941, letter of Dr Crofton from 22 Park Square East, Regents Park, London; Walpole Witness Statement, WS 218, BMH, NA, Dublin).

Crofton assured McGarry that he was in touch with the "highest personages on the other side", and begged McGarry to see him. Crofton was able to make official contacts in London as he spent some time there each week in a professional capacity. McGarry brought the letter to Michael Collins, who was not in favour of making any contact but advised McGarry to get Arthur Griffith's opinion. Griffith at that time, with de Valera in America, was the Acting-President of Dail Eireann. Griffith suggested to McGarry that "it might be useful to know" their game and, acting on this advice, McGarry visited Crofton that evening. Crofton claimed that he was in touch with British Cabinet Ministers and that he was anxious to prevent "a disastrous tragedy" in Ireland (McGarry, *Collins*, p.11).

Crofton informed McGarry that he had been contacted because "we know of your long record and position in the country". He added that General Macready "had promised him that so far as the military were concerned his house was immune". McGarry made it clear to Crofton that he, personally, could not speak for Sinn Fein. Privately McGarry was also doubtful about the negotiation and, on reporting back to Collins, he found that Collins "did not like the business any more than I did". However, Collins again advised making contact with Arthur Griffith and he,

once again, suggested that the talks should be continued (McGarry, *Collins*, p.12).

At McGarry's next meeting with Dr. Crofton, a few days later, General Wanless O'Gowan was present. McGarry described the General as dressed "in mufli, very suave, polished and polite" (McGarry, *Collins*, p.13). Wanless O'Gowan (1864-1947) had served with distinction in the Boer War and, as a Brigade and Divisional Commander (the 31 Division), he had engaged in actions at Ypres and the Somme during the Great War. Although he retired from the Army in February 1920, his marriage to Alice Bland of Derryquinn Castle, County Kerry, in 1887 provided him with an Irish connection (*The Times*, 17 Dec. 1947 obituary of Wanless O'Gowan; John David Raw, *The Bradford Pals*).

Indeed, both Crofton and O'Gowan assured McGarry that they were Irishmen. McGarry made it clear, as he had done at his first meeting with Crofton, that any negotiations would be worthless, if there was any call for the surrender of arms. O'Gowan, in reply, said that, at this stage, they were only concerned that their proposals should "not be summarily rejected". McGarry concluded by saying that it would be helpful to put the proposals in writing. When McGarry reported back to Collins and then to Griffith, he found that both men were against proceeding any further with the talks (McGarry, *Collins*, p.13).

From the British records it is evident that these talks began some time between 2nd November 1920, when General Macready first informed Sir John Anderson that they were taking place, and 9th November 1920, when Mark Sturgis, an official at Dublin Castle, commented on their progress. Sturgis recorded on 9th November that "direct communication is established between the PM (Lloyd George) and Dail Eireann which is itself an enormous step towards peace". He then asked, "shall we be putting away our pistols quite soon or shall we drop back into war bittered by yet another disappointment". If, at this stage, the decision of Collins and Griffith not to proceed any further with the talks had been acted upon, then the 'disappointment' would have taken place immediately.

However, at this delicate stage in the negotiations, Walpole managed to deliver two letters to Collins: one from himself, the other from Dr. Crofton that was dated 10th November 1920. This was the first time that Crofton had communicated directly with Collins and it led to another period of negotiation.

Walpole, in his own personal letter to Collins, which was addressed to him as

Commander-in-Chief of the IRA, provided the background for Crofton's new approach. He informed Collins that—

“some time ago I was approached by two very influential Irishmen saying they had something to offer the country. I am directly responsible for the business being sent to you as I think you have first claim.”

Walpole informed Collins that Dr. Crofton was very satisfied with the offers that had been made to him and “*he believes he has the goods for you*”.

The letter from Crofton to Collins on 10th November stated that he had—

“received a very definite and a most generous proposal to put before you. Speed is of the utmost importance. So do try. I can meet you anywhere in the country and absolutely guarantee immunity.”

Collins sent both these letters to Sean McGarry on 11th November and suggested that, reluctant as he was to ask him to see Dr. Crofton again, “*would it not be as well if you did go*”. Collins ended by referring to Walpole's letter—and to Walpole himself, describing him as a “*darned little ass*”. Later, McGarry defended Walpole's reputation, stating that he was “*a good lad*”, who was active in 1916, and that “it was his employer who so urgently and frantically was trying to make contact” (McGarry, *Collins*, p.14).

McGarry attempted to see Crofton, as requested by Collins in his letter, on the morning of Friday, 12th November. However, Crofton was not in his house at 32 Fitzwilliam Square. In fact, he and O'Gowan were discussing peace terms directly with Arthur Griffith. A report of this meeting was made in the evening of 12th November to Sir John Anderson. When McGarry did make contact with Crofton on the morning of Saturday, 13th November, he recorded that the meeting was—

“not nearly as friendly as the previous ones. I had to tell him that we were having no more of it and to discontinue his efforts to get in touch with Collins that there was a proper method of approach, which if they were serious the English Government would undoubtedly be able to find” (McGarry, p.15).

McGarry reported back to Collins, and to Griffith, who informed him that he had found out that General O'Gowan was “*a member of Macreedy's staff*”. From the Irish side this marked the final stage of peace negotiations on this particular front. The British account of McGarry's meeting came to a similar conclusion.

On the evening of Saturday, 13th November, Crofton and O'Gowan met Anderson and informed him that they had met “*M.C.'s*

right hand man this morning for about 2 hours”. McGarry, who was not personally identified by British sources, was also referred to as the Private Secretary of Collins.

In the British account of the meeting in the *Sturgis Diaries*, McGarry stressed that any settlement on the Irish side would be made by the Dail Cabinet and not by the individual decision of either Griffith or Collins. After this meeting there is no record of further peace negotiations with Dr. Crofton and General Wanless-O'Gowan as intermediaries.

The ending of these talks was, perhaps, not surprising as the assassination of British Intelligence agents, the event known as ‘*Bloody Sunday*’, took place on 21st November, and the *Kilmichael Ambush* occurred on 28th November.

However, these incidents did not prevent other peace overtures—notably those of Patrick Moylett in the week following ‘*Bloody Sunday*’, and those of Archbishop Clune, which began in early December 1920.

The last mention of Crofton and O'Gowan in the *Sturgis Diaries* was on 2nd February 1921: it was recorded that they— “*now speak for the moderates and say that Truce talks with the Shinnners is damaging to the moderate candidates*” (Hopkinson, *Sturgis*, p.118).

McGarry ended his account of the negotiations with the observation that they illustrated the good relationship that existed between Collins and Griffith. His final thoughts, however, concerned Collins, whom he described as “*the pivot of the movement at this time and remained so until the end*” (McGarry, *Collins*, p.16).

Sean McGarry was nominated on 24th May 1921 to contest the Election to the Second Dail Eireann for the constituency of Mid-Dublin. The Election was called in accordance with the requirements of the *Government of Ireland Act, December 1920*. Unlike the General Election of 1918, the seats for the 1921 Election were uncontested in the south of Ireland and, apart from the four representatives of Dublin University, all 124 members returned belonged to the Sinn Fein party.

This Dail, as did the first Dail Eireann, claimed to act as the Government of an all-Ireland Irish Republic. Elected with Sean McGarry to represent Mid-Dublin were Kathleen Clarke, Sean T. O'Kelly, and Philip Shanahan (Walker page 101).

Following the Truce of 11th July 1921, Sean McGarry attended the first meeting of the new Dail on 16th August 1921 (Dail Minutes, p.7: called as Sean Mac Garraidh, Baile Atha Cliath Meadh). He also attended the meeting on Friday, 26th August at which a new cabinet structure for Dail Eireann was

instituted and de Valera's title, as President of the Irish Republic, was formalised. Previously de Valera had used the title informally during his mission to the United States, June 1919 to December 1920.

The Cabinet was reduced to six members, called Secretaries of State, and other Ministers were appointed to head Departments without cabinet status. Sean McGarry seconded the nomination of Count Plunkett to become the Minister of Fine Arts (*Dail Minutes*, p.83). This re-fashioning of the Cabinet had a huge significance at the time of the Treaty, as many of the Ministers opposed to the Treaty no longer enjoyed full Cabinet powers.

Michael Collins, to whom McGarry was strongly bound by ties of friendship and shared membership of the IRB, was a member of the full Cabinet, along with Arthur Griffith, Cathal Brugha, Austin Stack, William Cosgrave and Robert Barton. Collins was not only Minister of Finance but also Director of Intelligence of the Irish Volunteers (Irish Republican Army) and President of the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

McGarry remained solidly committed to the policy of Collins during the negotiations that led from the Truce of 11th July 1921 to the first *Plenary Conference* in London on 11th October 1921, that was to culminate in the ‘*Treaty*’. Important stages on the way to the first Plenary Conference were the series of meetings between Eamon de Valera and Lloyd George in London (14-21 July); the proposal by the British Government for an Irish settlement (20 July); and the publication of the correspondence between de Valera and Lloyd George (15 August). All of these issues were debated at meetings of Dail Eireann at which McGarry, who was described as an *Alderman*, was present.

McGarry and the Treaty —speech in favour of Treaty

Following the signing of the *Articles of Agreement between Great Britain and Ireland* (the Treaty) on the morning of 6th December 1921, and the acceptance of the Articles by the Dail Cabinet on 8th December, with a vote of four to three in favour, a public debate began on the terms of the Treaty on Wednesday 14th December 1921.

Sean McGarry was present in the Council Chamber of University College Dublin, Earlsfort Terrace, to respond to the roll call of the Speaker, Eoin MacNeill. Speaking on that date, 14th December, McGarry maintained that the debate should be as open to the public as possible. While agreeing that “*there are one or two little points that ought*

to be decided in private session”, McGarry declared that “we are entitled to tell the public what the difference is, and what the difference has been” over the Treaty (Dail Eireann Minutes, p10).

McGarry also made it clear, in a discussion on the rights of the plenipotentiaries to conclude a Treaty, that the Dail was the ultimate arbiter on the matter. “The right of the Dail to ratify or reject the agreement”, he asserted, “has never been questioned” (Dail Eireann Minutes, p.14).

McGarry’s main speech on the Treaty was made on Tuesday 3rd January 1922. This was the first meeting of the Dail, after it had adjourned on 22nd December 1921 for a break over Christmas. Prior to the adjournment, 39 members had spoken in the debate: 20 were pro-Treaty; 19 were against; and there was one who declared that he was going to abstain. McGarry spoke for about ten minutes and was forthright in his support for the Treaty.

“I am supporting the motion for ratification of the Treaty, and I make no apology to anybody for doing so. I did not wait until I became a member of this Dail to become a Republican. I have worked in the Republican movement for twenty years. I am a Republican to-day and I will be a Republican tomorrow. I vote for the Treaty as it stands... I realise what its acceptance means, and I also realise what its rejection would mean, and it is because I realise these things that I am voting for it.”

He was, McGarry concluded, as committed to the document “as if my signature were on it” (Dail Minutes, 3 Jan. 1922, p.209; Padraig de Burca and John F. Boyle, *Free State or Republic*, Dublin, 1922, page 42).

McGarry’s views were expressed, as were those of the other Dail Deputies, not only in the context of the actual terms of the Treaty, but also with reference to Eamon de Valera’s alternative proposals to the Treaty that had been submitted to the Dail on 15th December 1921. These proposals of de Valera were referred to by Michael Collins as ‘Document number two’ (Longford, *de Valera*, p.172; O Snoddy, *Documents* pp 123-127). Central to the new document of de Valera was his contention that a connection between Ireland and Great Britain, based on “external association”, unlike the connection formulated in the Treaty, preserved not only an individual’s personal Oath to the Irish Republic but also the very identity of Ireland as a republic. On the other side, supporters of the Treaty, like McGarry, maintained that the terms of the Treaty preserved the values of the Irish Republic just as fully as de Valera’s document. An exchange of views between McGarry and Mary MacSwiney illustrated the diverse outlook on this issue:

McGarry: “Did any of us think we were going to get an Irish Republic in Downing Street?”

MacSwiney: “Of course you could.”

McGarry: “A Downing Street made Republic? (laughter)”

MacSwiney: “No, a Downing Street withdrawal from Ireland.”

McGarry: “Downing Street are withdrawing from Ireland.”

MacSwiney: “No, they are not” (Dail Eireann Minutes, 3 Jan. 1922, p.210).

McGarry felt that there was sufficient withdrawal of British control over Ireland to make the Treaty acceptable. To prove his point, he cited the *dictum* of Charles Stewart Parnell that “no man can set bounds to the march of a nation”, and he argued that in the past there were two factors setting these bounds: firstly, the British Army and, secondly, the British control of every nerve of national life—in particular of education, finance, customs and excise. McGarry argued that both of these constraints had now been removed by the Treaty [sic], and “it is the people who vote against the Treaty are setting bounds to the march of the nation’s progress”.

McGarry dismissed the claim of the opponents of the Treaty that they were standing on the bedrock of the Irish Republic and, choosing the words of Michael Collins, he declared that they were standing on “the slippery slopes of Document number two” (Ibid). That, he maintained, was the position of Mary MacSwiney, de Valera, and of his supporters.

McGarry concluded by asserting that the Treaty offered self-determination for Ireland and permitted further steps on the way to national advancement. With approval he cited the words of James Connolly, who had been his mentor in his youth, that the thing that matters most is “not so much the extent of the march, but the direction in which we are marching”. For McGarry there was no alternative to the Treaty. “You can have government in Ireland to-day by consent of the governed with this Treaty”, continuing:

“You can have self-extermination without it; but you cannot have war without the consent of the Irish people”.

The consent of the people, McGarry maintained, was no longer there for a resumption of the armed struggle against England. He added that those who had died in the struggle “would be with us to-day” (Ibid). On the day that McGarry made his speech, there were fourteen speeches in all: seven were pro-treaty; seven were against (Irish Independent, 4 Jan. 1922).

McGarry’s speech revealed his own personal views in favour of the Treaty. He was also, on his own admission, greatly

influenced by the stand taken by Michael Collins. McGarry later declared that “I am an unrepentant supporter of the stand taken by Collins and I believe that he was at his greatest during the Treaty debates”.

McGarry praised, in particular, the speeches by Collins during the debates in which we knew “what every phrase meant and every phrase had only one meaning” (McGarry, *Collins*, pp17,18).

Commitment to Michael Collins was also commitment to the IRB, of which organisation Collins was President. The IRB, both during the Treaty negotiations and after the *Articles of Agreement* had been signed in London, intervened decisively in shaping the course of events.

Following the Cabinet meeting of Dail Eireann on 3rd December 1921, in which de Valera had proposed an alternative formula on the *Oath of Allegiance* to that presented by the British Government, Michael Collins, after consultation with the IRB, drafted another formula. It was this formula of Collins, with some modifications from the British side, which was finally accepted into the *Articles of Agreement* (Brian P. Murphy, *John Chartres*, pp82-86).

If the IRB played a significant part in defining the terms of the Agreement, it played an equally prominent part in securing acceptance for the Agreement in the Dail. On 12th December 1921, immediately prior to the public debates on the Treaty, Michael Collins summoned a meeting of the Supreme Council of the IRB. The Council resolved that “the present peace Treaty between Ireland and Great Britain should be ratified”. It then added that members of the IRB “who have to take public action as representatives are given freedom of action on the matter” (O’Snoddy, *Document*, pp 122,123; Longford and O’Neill, p.174; Longford and O’Neill, *de Valera*, p.174).

Although several members of the IRB who sat in the Dail did use their freedom to oppose the Treaty (Harry Boland, for example), the majority of IRB deputies did vote for the Treaty and the power and influence of the IRB organisation was employed in favour of such a decision (Joseph M. Curran, *The Birth of the Irish Free State 1921-1923*, University of Alabama, 1980, pp 145,146 for a view that there was no major IRB influence).

Sean McGarry, a long term member of the IRB and a former President, could hardly have been unmoved by a decision of the Supreme Council. Indeed, granted his standing in the organisation, he may well have had some part to play in both of these significant meetings of the IRB.

(To be continued.)

Democracy And The Bomb

The man who has his eyes set on becoming President of the World, Joe Biden, informed us in mid-October that the most dangerous moment for the world since the Cuban Crisis of the early 1960s had just passed.

What happened in the Cuban Crisis was that the Democratic Party American President of the time, the Blessed John F. Kennedy, threatened that there would be nuclear war if Russian ships with nuclear weapons for Cuba were not turned back. The United States would not live with a neighbour armed with nuclear weapons. It would prefer to precipitate Armageddon than live in a condition of uncertainty. St. JFK of blessed memory threatened to end civilisation if the Russian ships did not turn around and go back home. And the Russians were chicken and they went home chastened.

That was how the affair appeared at the time.

When America was threatening nuclear war if Russia persisted in its attempt to locate a missile base in Cuba, it had itself a missile base in Turkey, on the Soviet border.

It was later revealed that a deal was made behind the scenes between the Kremlin and the White House that, if the Russian ships turned back, the American missiles in Turkey would later be withdrawn discreetly. But it was a condition of that agreement that it should be secret, and that it should be allowed to seem that Washington's firmness in its threat of general catastrophe had caused the Kremlin to turn chicken, and had thus established Western moral ascendancy.

The Chinese view at the time, as I recall it, was that it was "adventurist" on Khrushchev's part to locate nuclear missiles in Cuba—even though Washington had recently organised an invasion of Cuba with the object of overthrowing the Government—but that, once it had embarked on that adventurist exercise, it should not have called it off in the face of American threats of Armageddon.

China—having survived a century and a quarter (in the early 1960s) of destructive European aggressions, and Japanese aggression that began under Western sponsorship, and having restored itself in sovereignty on

its own ground—had a different sense of time. With its existence secured, it could bide its time. Its existence did not have the four year horizon that political existence had in states based on party antagonism and geared to the four-year electoral cycle.

The Chinese mode of existence is abhorrent to the European mind—the *Enlightenment* mind—which has now been reduced to the Ameranglian mind, which has been making a valiant attempt ever since the *First Opium War* to break it up.

The *First Opium War* coincided with the formation of Young Ireland and the publication of *The Nation*, which deplored the slaughter being inflicted by Britain on the Chinese—who had been rendered helpless by centuries of peaceful living.

There is today no such thing as *Western Civilisation*, properly speaking. European civilisation ended as an active thing with the British destruction of the Hapsburg civilisation in 1919, or with the Fascist order that arose to replace it. What exists is the American will to world dominance, with Europe sheltering under its wing.

America begins as English Puritanism, escaping from Anglican Protestantism, which took control of half a Continent by means of multiple genocide, secured itself as a Superstate by means of civil war, secularised itself lightly, and adopted an ideology of vigorous Individualism while retaining a fierce capacity for collective action.

Capitalism was inherent in it from the start, because it was not a development of an older form of society. It cleared away the older society in North America by exterminating it. It was the shoots of capitalism in England transferred to an emptied space.

Its international morality is that of *Manifest Destiny*, which was given expression by John L. Sullivan at the time of the Mexican War. Though unknown in Ireland, Sullivan was recently included in a listing of the *hundred greatest Irishmen*.

It was self-evident that the United States, having gone so far, should go all the way. *All the way*, to begin with, was the Pacific. But, when the Pacific was reached, it was remembered that water historically was not a medium of separation but a medium of communication.

Across the water lay Japan, which had been quietly living its own life for a couple of centuries, interfering with nobody. But non-interference was not acceptable in the busy world being created by the United States. It sent warships to Japan with the message: *Join in or else!*

War with Japan then came on the agenda because Japan, urged on by Britain from the other side of the world, constructed itself into a capitalist Empire which joined in the plunder of China, lest it should itself be plundered.

In 1945 the Democratic President of the time subjected Japan to nuclear bombing. The provoked Japanese attack on the USA had long been beaten off. All that was at issue was the mode in which defeated Japan would accept defeat. The USA insisted that it must surrender unconditionally, which meant putting itself entirely at the mercy of the USA. This was a twentieth century innovation in warfare introduced by Britain and America. The problem about it for the Japanese was the American insistence that the Emperor must authorise it. By doing it he would destroy his sanctity. But the sanctity of the Emperor was a central principle of Japanese political life—and a piece of superstitious nonsense in the American view.

If the Emperor would not debase himself, the United States would have to fight its way through to Tokyo against a Japanese Army dedicated to the Empire. So, to save the life of American soldiers, the United States decided on the massive destruction of Japanese civilians with nuclear bombs in order to put irresistible pressure on the Japanese Government by destroying population.

The American action has been the only use of nuclear weapons.

I remember reading in American magazines a few years after the bombing about how civilian deaths in Hiroshima were maximised by sending high-level American flights over the city in the week preceding the bombing, so that people would get used to them and not flee for shelter at the sight of them.

It began to be said in the 1960s that the killing of civilians in war was a War Crime for which there could be no defence. I remember that this was a theme of Alistair Cooke, the *Manchester Guardian* journalist, in his very popular *Letter From America*, broadcast on BBC Radio. Hiroshima and Nagasaki seemed to escape his notice.

There was no prosecution at Nuremberg for the killing of civilians. Nuclear bombing was outside the law. All destruction of population from aircraft seemed to be

outside the law—neither illegal nor legal, but legal by default.

The main British preparation for war in the 1930s was for the bombing of cities by heavy bombers. That was why it was short of battlefield aircraft in 1940. When it got going in 1941, its expertise was in the destruction of the industrial population by means of area bombing.

In preparation for the 2nd World War it was asserted in an *Oxford Union War Pamphlet* that the distinction between soldier and civilian had become obsolete in the 1914 War. Wars were now fought between peoples, not Armies:

“...in totalitarian war very few of the inhabitants of a belligerent country can be regarded as peaceful, that is to say, as not engaged in the war. The men in uniform who work behind the lines, in the commissariat or in the maintenance and repair of the machines of war, are recognised portion of the military forces. But the man or woman making nitro-glycerine or turning shells, though not wearing a uniform, is not occupied in tasks of peace. Nor are the people digging coal or weaving textiles whose export will finance the purchase of munitions from abroad. Nor really is any person who is producing any commodity or rendering any service to the community at war... In totalitarian war no one is peaceful, except the owners of useless mouths, the unemployed, the sick, aged and infirm, and the women who look after them” (*Blockade And The Civilian Population* by William Beveridge, i.e., Lord Beveridge, founder of the Welfare State).

In denying that there is a valid distinction between soldier and civilian in the useful population of a country, Beveridge is defending the practice of the Liberal/Home Rule Government of 1914 in using British dominance at sea to stop German seaborne trade after Germany had been encircled militarily on land. The stopping of German food imports was estimated to have caused half a million German deaths by starvation.

There was a British expectation that Germany could be worn down for a second time in 1939 by a Blockade supplemented by bombing. But the nature of the War was changed utterly when Germany responded to the Anglo-French declarations of war on it in the old-fashioned way of attacking the enemy armies in direct military conflict.

Germany was not defeated by the British bombing of working class areas of German cities, massive though it was in the later stages of the War. It was defeated when its armies were driven back to Berlin by the Russian army. It suffered defeat in battle, while the morale of its population had re-

mained unbroken by British terror-bombing.

The bombing of enemy population far behind the battle-lines was a practice of the Democracies in the World War. And the only use of nuclear weapons in war so far has been by the greatest of the Democracies.

There is no world system of law. And neither the Nuremberg Trials nor the formation of the United Nations contributed to the formation of such a system. Both were exercises in power by the victor states—Russia and America—and they exempted themselves from the rules they laid down for others. What counts therefore is not law but example. And the example set by Democracy is the activity of the United States.

It was the United States that threatened nuclear war in 1962. And it was the United States that used nuclear weapons in war in 1945, merely to finish off a state which was already defeated in substance. And it felt good about doing it. It is both the most powerful state in the world and the most democratic. How then could anything that it decides to do be wrong?

Its sovereignty is absolute. It follows its citizens wherever they choose to go. And Democratic President Obama revealed that its sovereignty accompanies the dollar into all the currencies that are based on it. He also revealed that it is “*the only indispensable nation*” in the world. That means that it is the only thing in the world that really matters.

The danger of nuclear war was talked up by President Biden last month in response to a demand by President Zelensky of the Ukraine for a pre-emptive strike by NATO against Russia, and the Russian response to it.

Zelensky was later brought to “*clarify*” that what he meant was a First Strike of sanctions—which would have been gibberish. Russia was put under sanctions long before it intervened in the Ukraine. But the mainstream media dutifully reported that what he asked for was just more sanctions, and that Putin responded by threatening nuclear war.

August BBC Foreign Correspondent John Simpson was in the Ukraine at the time. He was interviewed on BBC Radio. The point was emphasised that he had just crossed into Poland. Radio is on the margin of mainstream media, where things can be said that would be unacceptable on television. And Simpson has been making a feature of giving “*unspun*” reports. He said Zelensky had demanded a pre-emptive strike, which was not unreasonably taken to mean a nuclear strike. He said that Zelensky had “*misspoken*”, which was possibly an obscure way of explaining that he was high on drugs.

When Democratic President Truman exterminated the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I was in the Infants’ School in Boherbue which was being taught by Mrs. Coleman of Millstreet, whose son later became a famous rally driver. She explained to us about *infinities* and *infinitesimals*, and how matter disappeared when it was broken up, and how the atom, when it was split, was found not to be solid but to be an empty shell with nothing but invisible forces inside it, which forces, however, could blow up the world when released.

My understanding of the physics of atoms never went beyond that.

The physicists who were intent on splitting the atom just to see what was inside understood from the start that it was a dangerous game. During the World War they were gathered together in the United States and given the task of constructing the explosive power of split atoms into a usable weapon for use against Germany, which the Western Democracies were unable to make war against effectively by any other means.

Unless Germany was defeated democracy would vanish from the Earth. The urgent search for a weapon of mass destruction continued after the German advance was halted decisively in 1942-3—by Russia.

Defeat of Germany by Russia would only raise the problem of how to defeat Russia. And Germany, at the eleventh hour, might succeed in producing the nuclear weapon and win the war. And so there was a nuclear arms race between American and Germany in the closing years of the War.

Germany was defeated by Russia in a series of battles. In 1944 America had succeeded in obliging Britain to allow a cross-Channel, so that American forces could be in Germany in 1945 to meet the Russians.

Germany surrendered in May 1945. No trace of a nuclear weapons development was found there.

The ostensible purpose which justified the production of nuclear weaponry no longer existed. But the American Government and the scientists kept up the effort to produce nuclear bombs, despite the possibility that they might be infinitely destructive. They were the weapon that would ensure the survival and success of *liberty*.

The nuclear bomb was the weapon of the democratic elite of the world. It was never used by anybody else.

Brendan Clifford

New Book On The 1921 Treaty Delegation

On behalf of a group of descendants of the 1921 Treaty delegation, I am sending you this message to make you aware of a recently published book, *The Men and Women of the Anglo-Irish Treaty Delegations 1921*.

This commemorative volume differs from other histories of the period in that its focus is on all the men and women who travelled to London in October 1921, not just the five plenipotentiaries (Griffith, Collins, Barton, Duggan and Gavan Duffy). It reveals some of the human stories behind the negotiations, and includes biographies of most of the advisers, staff, secretaries, chaperones, couriers, and security and domestic staff, who worked diligently in the background during the three months of negotiations leading to the signing of the Treaty. The material in the book is based on family memories, diaries, letters, memoirs, and photos provided by descendants of delegation members, as well as other contemporary sources.

The book's editors, Fiona Murray and Eda Sagarra, are both grandchildren of two of the delegation members.

The book can be purchased online for €16.95 plus postage, but we are willing to offer your readers the chance to purchase a copy at a discount, for €15. It is intended for both historians and general readership, and therefore would make an excellent Christmas gift. If our proposal suits you, we will be happy to post you a minimum of five, and a maximum of fifteen copies, on a sale or return basis.

For orders of less than five copies, we ask you to inform your members that they can buy it directly at www.buythebook.ie/1921treatydelegations. We would also be very grateful if you could put details of this book on your society's Facebook page / webpage / newsletter, etc. and would be happy to provide you with more information if necessary and look forward to hearing back from you.

Cathal McSwiney Brugha

Unpublished Letter To *Irish Post*

ILLUSIONS, Fancies and Hard Fact

The piece by Malachi O'Doherty— "*One of Ireland's Leading Political Commentators*" (15 October) is interesting but unconvincing.

Patrick Pearse never publicly promoted a "*Gaelic and Catholic Ireland*". Indeed, in his oration at Wolfe Tone's grave he rated the Deist, Wolfe Tone, above St Patrick— which at least bordered on Blasphemy.

Pearse inherited his radicalism from his English father, a fervent admirer of the Atheist, Charles Bradlaugh.

Pearse's essay on Education in Ireland under British Rule— "*The Murder Machine*" — appears to be inspired by "*Hard Times*" by Charles Dickens, another Englishman.

Pearse told how a father of one of his pupils complained to him that all his son wanted to do was play the penny whistle. Pearse urged him to buy the boy one.

"*Hard Times*" was an attack by Dickens on joyless Benthamite Utilitarianism, the "*Gradgrind*" devotion of facts to the exclusion of fanciful imagination. One of the teachers is called Mr. *M'Choakumchild*.

I would be very surprised if Pearse never read *Hard Times*.

Much of what still passes for education in schools and universities in many countries is Benthamite. The Englishman, Henry Newman (the finest prose essayist of the 19th Century, according to James Joyce), delivered his "*Idea of a University*" to students in Dublin, advocating Education for its own sake, and not merely for getting a job.

It seems to me that Benthamism is rife in Irish 'Educational' establishments, but that the Gradgrind adoration of facts is missing from the History Faculties.

Mr O'Doherty is too indulgent towards Winston Churchill. He hasn't got the old scoundrel's measure.

If Churchill had been religious it might be suggested he said more than his prayers, His observations on the "*dreary steeples of Fermanagh and Tyrone*" may fall easy on the ears, but those who have informed matter between their ears will recognise unintended ironies.

Less than fifty years before Churchill was born there were no Catholic steeples in the whole of Ireland, nor were Catholic 'Chapels' allowed belfries nor bells, nor were Catholics allowed to sit in Parliament. The relaxation of some restrictions on Catholics brought the sculptor father of Patrick Pearse to Ireland, where new Churches were being built after centuries of destruction, or expropriation by a body *by British law established*.

Perhaps anti-Communism is the First Refuge of a Scoundrel. Certainly Churchill was the foremost anti-Bolshevik in the English world and he sent troops to Russia to strangle the Revolution at Birth. Less than thirty years later after the Soviets liberated Europe from Nazism, Churchill was hoping, in 1945 of joining with the defeated Nazis in a new onslaught on Russia.

Mr O'Doherty exults at the decline of Catholicism and dances prematurely at what he imagines are the death throes of the Irish Language.

A great Englishman, Dr. Johnson, said he was always sorry when a language was lost, because languages are the pedigrees of nations.

If the only good Tories are dead ones, (Dr) Johnson and Swift were the very best of them.

Donal Kennedy

On behalf of the Treaty Descendants Group

<https://theanglo-irish-treaty-delegations1921.org/the-treaty-generation>

Emeritus Professor of Decision Analytics, University College Dublin

<https://people.ucd.ie/cathal.brugha>

Cathal Brugha Biography - Available in Bookshops

<https://www.fourcourtspress.ie/books/2022/cathal-brugha/>

Forthcoming <https://www.corkuniversitypress.com/The-Art-and-Ideology-of-Terence-MacSwiney-p/9781782055037.htm>

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

USA War in Ukraine

The media—I suppose we should call it the mainstream media (MSM)—is making a meal out of Biden’s War in Ukraine. A proper dog’s dinner the MSM is making of it. Sometimes a bit of truth gets out in the financial pages, or in *‘The Financial Times’*, where money matters—but mostly it is very dirty and not so subtle anti-Russian propaganda. This is so particularly in *‘The Irish Times’*, and in its Cork branch, *‘The Irish Examiner’*, where there are often three or four blatant propaganda pieces, and nearly always at least one substantial propaganda article from *‘The Guardian’* of London, every day. Just skip them. They are so anti-Russian and anti-President Putin as to be laughable: if the whole matter was not so serious.

It is almost unbelievable that the leaders of the various EU countries are like lapdogs, obeying the wishes and commands of President Biden and his USA hirelings. Will no European leader stand up against Biden by just ignoring him—other than Hungary’s Victor Orban? The Biden policy of voting hundreds of billions of US tax dollars to aid Ukraine will eventually prove to be suicidal for the US economy and polity. It does not have the support of the US people and the US does not, in the final analysis, have the resources. The percentage of the population below the poverty-line in the USA is enormous and getting bigger. It will end up like the UK, managing to put on a great show of wealth but underneath it is wasting away.

In the meantime, the USA is the most warring nation on Earth: and yet for various technical reasons it lies by saying that “it—the USA—is not at war with anyone! And then there is China.

China

China has always been bigger than the USA. Always. Backward perhaps by US/UK standards, but who is setting the standards? It is US/UK who are setting

the standards, which tend to be GNP or Stock Exchange Capitalisation or some other nebulous concept. I say nebulous because, for example, a concept like GNP is only useful for comparison between similar economies which operate in a similar way—and even then it is a matter of the economist’s judgement to decide: are the economies similar in the first place, before using GNP as a measuring rod.

Take for example, Ireland of 1845 to 1847—where the people were starving to death in the midst of plenty of food. During the Irish Holocaust, the landlords would not accept payment in potatoes, but the landlord demanded payment in monies’ worth of corn, or of pigs, or of cattle, or butter. Money did not in most cases change hands—it was the produce which paid the rent, as valued by the land agent. Many tenants could and did take the produce to the market and sell it for money, and the money paid the rent.

The tenants were left with the potatoes to eat and they were blighted and rotten, and so many people starved to death. It was impossible to measure GNP in these circumstances.

Or take Ireland in the 1950s, when the annual economic statistics had a substantial figure of millions of “*emigrant’s remittances*”. There was a great custom of emigrants to the UK or USA sending home to their parents Pound notes and Dollar notes in letters. Not all of these remittances were gifts however. As much as half could have been payments for tickets in *Irish Hospital Trust* sold by emigrants. The practice was to send home a parcel of clothes within which the ticket stubs were concealed, and then the money in Dollars or Pounds would be sent separately. Thousands of homes in Ireland were involved and the total money came to millions of Dollars and Pounds—which were not reflected in Ireland’s GNP, except as *‘Invisible Earnings’*, and *‘emigrants remittances’*.

And then how do economists account for a man who was in school with me and who I met on an aeroplane coming back from New York. He was strangely frosty when I greeted him. He sat next to a huge, man-size, suitcase which was in a separate seat beside him. When the plane arrived at Shannon Airport, he got off with the huge suitcase and he was closely attended by two sleek-looking men, who had been sitting near him on the plane. A large black limousine was waiting at the foot of the boarding steps and the three men and the suitcase got in and the car drove off. It

was clear they were not going through Custom clearance. I knew my friend (he was quite friendly towards me when we would meet at Mass or around town) and his family were connected with Patrick J. McGrath of *Irish Hospital Trust Sweepstakes*. And so GNP is a slippery fish and can be very misleading when dealing with economies.

And so is *Stock Market Capitalisation*, because the USA and the UK do have enormous wealth represented by companies whose shares are quoted on the Stock Exchanges—so had China but, in addition, China’s farms are owned either by co-operatives or by a relatively small number of wealthy landlords. The economy in China is organised much differently to the USA or UK economies. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese people do not live on land at all. Land is too precious and so they live in boats called sampans. Families spend their whole lives on sampans. Fishing for fish and for seaweed is widespread and fishers exchange their fish for rice and fruit. Barter is very widely used still. And so it is impossible to calculate a meaningful GNP.

What we do know is that China’s population is five or six times bigger than that of the USA and all of the Chinese are surviving happily, so it is easy to see that China is the biggest economy in the world.

The Chinese invented paper-making, and paper money, and gun powder (used to frighten Ghenghis Khan’s horses)—and in 1421 (according to our calendar) the Chinese sent five enormous fleets out to map the world. The Chinese people in San Francisco have been there since 1421 at least, long before the Spanish or Portuguese got there. And Christopher Columbus, who did not discover North America, had a map with him on his voyage to the Caribbean Islands—a copy of a Chinese map. Forty two of Christopher Columbus’s ships of 1492 would have fitted on the deck of one of the Chinese ships of 1421. Then, as now, the Chinese are the greatest boat builders in the world.

If the USA starts a war over Taiwan, there is not much doubt the USA will not be the winner.

Michael Stack ©

LABOUR continued

Apple has agreed to a pay increase of 4.25% for Cork workers backdated to 1st October, 2021, which is in line with a recommendation from the Labour Court in July, 2022.

The Labour Court recommended that the 3% pay increase originally offered to 408 production operators at Apple's Hollyhill, Cork, manufacturing facility for this period should be increased by an additional 1.25%.

Apple has also agreed to a further pay increase of 5% backdated to the start of this month, meaning employees in Cork will benefit from a total pay rise of 9.25%.

On top of the pay rise, Cork workers will see their annual partnership payment, a yearly performance based bonus of €500, doubled to €1,000.

Apple have also committed to bridge the existing pay gap between those on permanent and long-term fixed contracts.

The Agreement was reached after two long days of negotiations with SIPTU Union representatives and was accepted on 30th September, 2022.

Greg Ennis, SIPTU Manufacturing Division Organiser, said that the Union was happy that the pay dispute did not escalate to industrial action.

He said that S.I.P.T.U. will “*make no apologies*” for taking industrial action in recent months to “*get workers decent pay increases to combat the cost of living crisis*”, such as in Bausch and Lomb in Waterford and in Kyte Powertech in Cavan.

“At today’s Irish Congress of Trade Unions Executive committee meeting, Owen Reidy, the outgoing Assistant General Secretary was ratified as the new General Secretary of the Congress following Patricia King, after she stepped down from the post this month”

(ICT. press statement-19.10.2022).

Owen Reidy has 24 years of full-time experience in the Irish Trade Union movement. He started his career as a union official in SIPTU in the west of Ireland and occupied a range of roles in the union representing and organising workers in the aviation, insurance, and finance, non-commercial semi-states, and cleaning and security sectors.

In 2016, Mr. Reidy took up the position of Assistant General Secretary of the ICTU, with primary responsibility for the Congress in Northern Ireland. Mr. Reidy came through a competitive interview process to be selected as the new General Secretary.

Mr. Reidy said the recent European Union directive on adequate minimum wages has the potential to “*radically transform*” industrial relations in Ireland and Europe.

Last month the EU Parliament adopted new legislation, which set out that minimum wages in all EU countries should allow for decent living and working standards, and member states should promote collective bargaining for pay.

He pointed out that the biggest challenge facing Trade Unions currently was turning the trend of declining density seen over the last 20 to 30 years.

He said a recent report showed that 52% of 16 to 34 year-olds weren't in a trade union but resonated with their values and wanted to join a union.

Organise, Organise!

“I think if we have the right strategic approach, we can reach out to the new generation of workers and build our movement, both with that directive and the high level group report [on collective bargaining]”, he said.

“There’s a lot of work to be done, but there are huge opportunities and we’re determined as a collective leadership to do that. We want to make sure that every worker in Ireland that wants to be organised has the right to be organised and I think we can achieve that with those two instruments.”

Mr. Reidy is a father of two and hails from Greencastle on the Inishowen peninsula in Co. Donegal and lived in Raphoe and Dunfanaghy for a time as a young lad.

*Ukraine: While workers defend the country, parliament turns against them

Ukraine’s Parliament has passed two bills that obliterate workers’ rights to collective bargaining and other fundamental labour protections, and allow employers to put up to 10% of their workforce on “zero hour” contracts leaving them without any control over their working lives.

If signed by President Volodimir Zelenskyy, the bills will become law. The ITUC Ukraine affiliates FPU and KVPU have condemned the moves.

Two further draft bills have moved forward the possible confiscation of properties owned by the FPU union centre, which have housed some 300,000 internally displaced persons and continue to provide hubs for accommodation of internally displaced people and vital humanitarian assistance to

families who have lost everything and whose members are on the front lines of resisting the Russian invasion.

The laws to remove workers’ rights had been put forward in the Parliament prior to the invasion, but were failed to move forward. The ITUC, ILO and ETUC criticised the proposals at that time. With workers preoccupied with fighting the Russian invasion and unions focused on humanitarian work and keeping the country running, the state of emergency deprives them of the possibility to publicly mobilise against the destruction of rights and theft of their property.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said “It is grotesque that while Ukrainian workers defend the country and care for the injured, sick and displaced, that they are now under attack from their own parliament while their backs are turned. The big majority of Ukraine’s workers work for enterprises

with less than 250 employees, and it is these workers who will be deprived of protection of their wages, conditions and safety if President Zelenskyy signs the bills into law. On top of that, the threat to confiscate property from the unions is aimed at stopping them opposing the draconian bills, and will allow oligarchs to take future ownership of them at bargain basement prices. Despite the war, Ukrainian politics seems to be business as usual, only now under martial law. The law adopted last September to limit the power of Ukrainian oligarchs over the Parliament and the country has clearly failed. We call on the President to stand up to the oligarchs and refuse to sign the bills, and to make it clear that property rights will in future be protected in Ukraine”.

The ITUC and ETUC have protested to the Ukrainian authorities about the Bills, which clearly violate key ILO Conventions.

Volume Four (a): 3rd January, 1921 to 16th March, 1921. 366pp.

Volume Four (b): 18th March, 1921 to 31st May, 1921. 414pp.

Volume Five: 1st June, 1921 to 19th October, 1921. 560pp

Volume Six: (Final volume) in preparation.

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EAMON de VALERA,
March 30, 1921

“THE Army of the Republic is a recognised state force under the civil control of the elected representatives of the people, with an organisation and discipline imposed by these representatives, and under officers who hold their commissions under warrant from these representatives. The Government is therefore responsible for the actions of this army. These are not the acts of irresponsible individual groups therefore, nor is the I.R.A., as the enemy would have one believe, a pretorian guard. It is the national army of defence.”

“Do you consider the ambushing of British forces justifiable?” the interviewer asked.

“Certainly,” answered the President. “If the Irish nation and the Irish Republic as a state directly founded upon the will and the consent of the people is not entitled to use force to defend itself, then no nation and no state is entitled to use force. The English forces are in our country as invaders, on a war footing as they themselves have declared, in fact waging war upon us, not only an unjust but a barbarous. Protected by the most modern war appliances, they swoop down upon us and kill and burn and loot and outrage—why should it be wrong of us to do our utmost to see that they do not do these things with impunity?”

“If they may use their tanks and steel-armoured cars, why should we hesitate to use the cover of stone walls and ditches? Why should the use of the element of surprise be denied to us apart from the fact that we are a nation unjustly attacked and defending a most sacred right—every army uses it. For us not to use it if we purposed defending ourselves at all would

be stupid. If German forces had landed in England during the recent war, would it have been wrong for Englishmen to harass the invader by every means in their power? If not wrong for Englishmen why wrong for us?”

Mr. de Valera speaking for the Irish people and Government, gave an interview to the representatives of the “International News” and the “United Service.” It is an explanation of the activities of the Irish

Volunteer Army or I.R.A., which was widely represented abroad as an irresponsible force, acting without any national or governmental authority. Anglo-Irish hostilities by this time had reached a critical phase, and Mr. de Valera, President of the Irish Government, as well as Michael Collins, Minister of Finance and Director of Intelligence, Cathal Brugha, Minister of Defence, and other leaders were “on the run,” somewhere in Ireland.

Readers are invited
to send in their Trade Union news

Organised Labour!

“Unions do expect to be back in negotiations next year to secure pay terms beyond the lifetime of the current agreement, which will expire at the end of 2023”, said ICTU President, Chief negotiator and Fórsa General Secretary *Kevin Callinan. (7.10.2022)*

Public Sector

A new Public Sector pay deal worth 6.5% for 340,000 public servants has been ratified by an overwhelming majority vote by Trade Union members.

The decision follows a meeting of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions Public Service Committee (P.S.C.) to consider the result of recent ballots by public service unions on the revised public service pay measures.

Once implemented, the pay deal would see pay increases of 3% backdated from February 2, a further 2% from March 1 next year, and 1.5% or €750 (whichever is greater) from October 1, 2023. This is in addition to 1% or €500, whichever is greater, due at the beginning of October 2022.

The minimum payment of €750 a year from next October means the package would be worth 8% to a worker earning €25,000 a year and 7% to a person on €37,500 a year, the ICTU said.

All of the affiliated Unions taking

part in the ballot voted in favour of the proposals.

PSC Chairman and ICTU President Kevin Callinan said the strong showing in favour of the pay deal reflects a recognition by workers that these pay measures will be a helpful support to people at a critical time.

“It can’t just be left to workers. What we’ve seen over the last 40 years is a huge shift in the wealth away from labour to capital. It’s totally unfair to expect the workers will bear the brunt of that, concluded Mr. Callinan”

Meanwhile, SIPTU Deputy General Secretary, John King, said today:

“These are extraordinary times with high levels of inflation and resulting cost of living increases and, while these pay terms do not match these, they will go a long way towards providing real relief to S.I.P.T.U. members in the public service, and provide long-lasting improvements to their pay and conditions of employment.

Landmark Outcome:

“Workers in Apple Cork have received a pay rise of 9.25%, as the result of months of dispute between union representatives and the company, as well as the Labour Court weighing in on the pay row.

(The Echo, Cork, 15.10.2022)

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LABOUR

Comment

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The Irish Bulletin

Frank Gallagher (1930) — *The Irish Bulletin*

THE *Irish Bulletin* was the daily organ of the Irish Government during the War of Independence. It was first published (in the cyclostyled form it always kept) in November, 1919. It seems to have originated with a typewritten sheet issued to the press about once a fortnight in the spring and summer of 1919 from the Dail Eireann Publicity Department, giving a summary of British acts of aggression. This was first compiled under Laurence Ginnell's Directorship of Publicity. I was then his assistant.

In November, 1919, the Director of Publicity for Sinn Fein, Robert Brennan, planned an organ for the Government, and the *Irish Bulletin* was the result.

At first it took the form of listing acts of violence and aggression by the British, and was not daily in its publication. Afterwards, it became the daily organ, and published elaborate statements of the Irish case, and a full history of the contemporary growth and development of the Republican Government. Later still it published a regular weekly supplement called the *Weekly Review*, which gave a running history of the guerilla war, compiled from the official reports of the I.R.A. Commandants in the field.

The *Irish Bulletin* was published under the general editorship of whoever was Director of Publicity—first Desmond FitzGerald and then Erskine Childers. In the main it was compiled by me. When Erskine Childers became Director (February, 1921), the *Bulletin* was a joint work, except in the case of numerous brilliant issues which were written by him alone.

At first only a few hundred copies were printed, but as the war continued and the interest in the struggle grew abroad the number increased until at the end over 2,000 copies went out daily to the British, Irish and foreign press, to Heads of States and leading politicians in England and America, to writers everywhere who showed any sympathy at all with freedom, and to heads of Churches. It also went to all the Republics foreign representatives, being translated into the language of the particular country and circulated in large numbers.

Its main circulation was, of course, was to the Press in London, Paris, Rome, Madrid, Berlin, etc. and to every national paper in America. Most of the critics of the Black-in-Tan regime in the British Parliament, platform, and Press received their information through the *Bulletin*. Its last number appeared about a week after the Treaty was signed. There a full file of the *Bulletin* in the National Library, and

I have heard of other complete files in private hands, but it is now exceedingly rare and of prime historic value. In March, 1921, the *Bulletin* office was discovered by the British, and its whole extensive plant and files carried off. There was a staff of seven. Dublin Castle afterwards issued forged editions to those named on lists captured in the same raid. The genuine *Bulletin* continued without missing an issue.—*The Irish Book Lover*.

This is a brief account of the history of a remarkable "underground" journal, issued by the Irish resistance movement in 1919-21, when the liberty of the published press in Ireland was greatly restricted. Mr. Frank Gallagher, the main contributor to the "Bulletin," was the head of the Irish Government Bureau before and during World War II. He is now Chairman of the Research Committee on the Partition question. The "Irish Book Lover" is published by Mr. Colm O Lochlainn, a specialist in fine printing and himself a veteran of the Insurrection of 1916. (James Carty-Ireland from the Great Famine to The Treaty-C. Fallon Limited Dublin-IV Edition 1966)

Irish Bulletin a full reprint of the official newspaper of Dail Eireann, giving news and war reports:

Volume One: 12th July, 1919 to 1st May, 1920. 514pp.

Volume Two, 3rd May, 1920 to 31st August, 1920. 540pp.

Volume Three: 1st September, 1920 to 1st January, 1921. 695pp. Index. ISBN 978-1-872078-24-3 .

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